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BARCELONA CALL IN THE GHOST-BUSTERS

Cruyff's men can make it third time lucky

By KEIR **RADNEDGE**

HISTORY should repeat itself when Barcelona tackle Sampdoria in Wembley's first Champions' Cup Final since Liverpool's drab defeat of Brugge in 1978.

Three years ago, in Berne, Barcelona beat Sampdoria in the Final of the Cup-winners' Cup.

That victory exorcised one ghost of 1961 when, also in Berne, hot favourites Barcelona were staggeringly beaten by then "unknown" Benfica in the Champions' Cup Final.

Another ghost is due to be exorcised: one which has haunted the Catalan club like no other. For all their power and money, Barcelona have never won the Champions' Cup. Its absence from their vast trophy catacomb in Nou Camp presents an enormous void, both physical and psychological.

Now, at long, long last, that void should be filled.

This means no disrespect to Sampdoria, whose group victory over outgoing title-holders Red Star Belgrade in Sofia was an admirable exercise in tactics and technique. But both season's form and history are on Barcelona's side.

At the turn of the 1960s, Barcelona were heirs-apparent to Real Madrid's throne. These two were not only the giants of Spain, but club giants of the world. It was Arsenal/Tottenham or Rangers/Celtic multiplied by 100, the heavyweight prize fight of world soccer.

When Barcelona deposed Real Madrid as European champions in the autumn of 1960 — as outlined in our recent Great Matches booklet — the Catalans appeared poised for takeover.

It never happened.

In 1975, led by Johan Cruyff, Barcelona were stopped in the semi-finals by Leeds. Elimination cost coach Rinus Michels his job. But worse was to come.

Guided

In 1986, guided off the field by Terry Venables and on it by Bernd Schuster, Barsa reached the final for a second time. The venue was, handily, just down the coast in Seville.

Opponents Steaua Bucharest were just there to make up the numbers. After all, no East European club had ever won the Champions' Cup and far better teams than Steaua had tried, and failed.

The result was a defeat of almost more galling proportions than 1961. The match was a far, far poorer spectacle. And, at the end, Barcelona were beaten again . . . not over the match but by the vicious expedient of penalties.

Tactically, Steaua were brilliant. Barcelona never approached the Romanian goal. At least, in 1961, they had hit the woodwork three times. In 1986 they could not even blame bad luck.

In other competitions Barcelona have gloried. They dominated the early Fairs' Cup; three times they have won the Cup-winners' Cup. But the fans consider these minor pickings indeed set alongside the Champions' Cup.

Here, Sampdoria may have an advantage.

The outgoing Italian champions do not carry the baggage of history. Also, after an infuriatingly inconsistent season they will start as underdogs.

All the pressure belongs to Barcelona. The Catalans' strength is in their domestic form this year.

They pulled back eight points on league leaders Real Madrid. Compared with Sampdoria they are the form team.

Nor is this the Barcelona who stuttered and stammered last year in falling to Manchester United in the Cup-winners' Cup Final. This time Zubizarreta (suspended last term) should support the defence with his goalkeeping security; in front of him Ronald Koeman is back to full fitness; Guardiola and ex-Mallorca player Nadal have stirred up a static midfield; Hristo Stoichkov, up front, is a striker with a nasty, irritant factor which puts him in the Hugo Sanchez class.

No wonder Internazionale would love to take him to Italy.

Equipped

Fortunately, for Sampdoria, they have a coach — wily Yugoslav veteran Vujadin Boskov — who is ideally equipped to turn Barcelona's strengths to his own advantage.

Boskov has his own score to settle with the Champions' Cup. In 1981 he was manager of the Real Madrid side beaten in Paris by Liverpool. He made silly mistakes in both tactics and team selection. Not this time.

The attacking onus is — as in 1961 and 1986 — on Barcelona. That, of course, suits Sampdoria. In typical Italian fashion Pagliuca, Mannini, Vierchowod and Co. plan to soak up the pressure, then release Roberto Mancini and Gianluca Vialli on those deadly counter-attacking thrusts at Barcelona's over-stretched defence.

In the 1989 Cup-winners' Cup Final, similar tactics failed. Sampdoria's defenders lacked the experience to cope with Barsa's wide-edged attack; Vialli was overawed by the occasion.

This time could be different. But, if justice is to be done, then Barcelona should carry the day.

Man in charge . . . Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff

Dane in Spain . . . Michael Laudrup celebrates a goal.

Semi-final stopper . . . Bakero (right) in action against Benfica.

PREVIOUS EUROPEAN FINALS BETWEEN SPANISH AND ITALIAN CLUBS

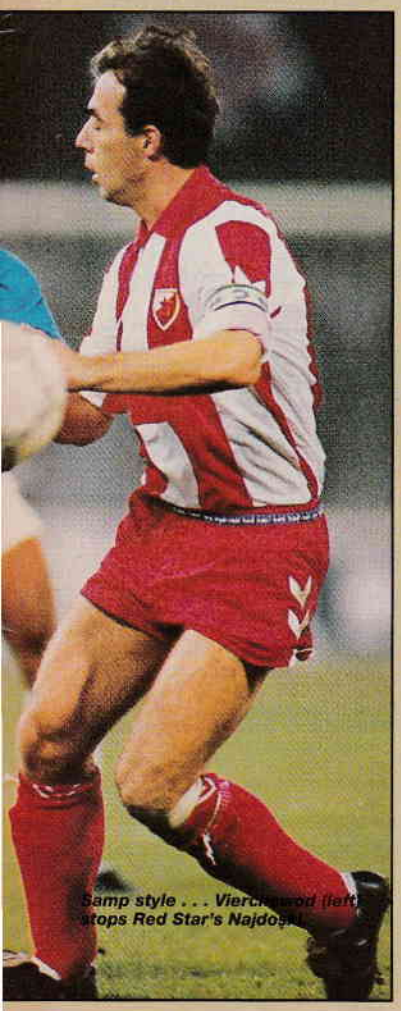
Year	Cup	Opponents	Res	Venue	Att
1957	ECC	Real Madrid v Fiorentina	2-0	Madrid	124,000
1958	ECC	Real Madrid v Milan	3-2	Brussels	67,000
1962	CWC	Atletico Madrid v Fiorentina	1-1	Glasgow	30,000
Replay	CWC	Atletico Madrid v Fiorentina	3-0	Stuttgart	39,000
1964	ECC	Internazionale v Real Madrid	3-1	Vienna	72,000
1977	UEC	Juventus v Athletic Bilbao	1-0	Turin	75,000
1977	UEC	Athletic Bilbao v Juventus	2-1	Bilbao	43,000
		Juventus won on away goal			
1989	CWC	Barcelona v Sampdoria	2-0	Berne	45,000

CHAMPIONS' CUP FINALS

Year	Opponents	Res	Venue	Att
1956	Real Madrid v Stade de Reims	4-3	Paris	38,000
1957	Real Madrid v Fiorentina	2-0	Madrid	124,000
1958	Real Madrid v Milan	3-2 (aet)	Brussels	67,000
1959	Real Madrid v Stade de Reims	2-0	Stuttgart	80,000
1960	Real Madrid v Eintracht Frankfurt	7-3	Glasgow	127,621
1961	Benfica v Barcelona	3-2	Berne	33,000
1962	Benfica v Real Madrid	5-3	Amsterdam	68,000
1963	Milan v Benfica	2-1	Wembley	45,000
1964	Internazionale v Real Madrid	3-1	Vienna	72,000
1965	Internazionale v Benfica	1-0	Milan	80,000
1966	Real Madrid v Partizan Belgrade	2-1	Brussels	55,000
1967	Celtic v Internazionale	2-1	Lisbon	55,000
1968	Manchester United v Benfica	4-1 (aet)	Wembley	100,000
1969	Milan v Ajax	4-1	Madrid	50,000
1970	Feyenoord v Celtic	2-1 (aet)	Milan	53,187
1971	Ajax v Panathinaikos	2-0	Wembley	90,000
1972	Ajax v Internazionale	2-0	Rotterdam	61,000
1973	Ajax v Juventus	1-0	Belgrade	93,500
1974	Bayern Munich v Atletico Madrid	1-1 (aet)	Brussels	65,000
Replay	Bayern Munich v Atletico Madrid	4-0	Brussels	23,000
1975	Bayern Munich v Leeds United	2-0	Paris	48,000
1976	Bayern Munich v St Etienne	1-0	Glasgow	54,684
1977	Liverpool v Borussia Mg	3-1	Rome	57,000
1978	Liverpool v Club Brugge	1-0	Wembley	92,000
1979	Nottm Forest v Malmo	1-0	Munich	57,500
1980	Nottm Forest v Hamburg SV	1-0	Madrid	51,000
1981	Liverpool v Real Madrid	1-0	Paris	48,360
1982	Aston Villa v Bayern Munich	1-0	Rotterdam	46,000
1983	Hamburg SV v Juventus	1-0	Athens	80,000
1984	Liverpool v AS Roma	1-1	Rome	69,693
		4-2 (pens)		
1985	Juventus v Liverpool	1-0	Brussels	58,000
1986	Steaua Bucharest v Barcelona	0-0	Seville	70,000
		2-0 (pens)		
1987	FC Porto v Bayern Munich	2-1	Vienna	56,000
1988	PSV Eindhoven v Benfica	0-0	Stuttgart	55,000
		6-5 (pens)		
1989	Milan v Steaua Bucharest	4-0	Barcelona	97,000
1990	Milan v Benfica	1-0	Vienna	56,000
1991	Red Star Belgrade v Marseille	0-0	Bari	50,000
		4-3 (pens)		

Precison . . . Lombardo of Sampdoria.

Poise . . . Witschge of Barcelona.



Samp style . . . Vierchowod (left) stops Red Star's Najdoski.

WHAT'S ON?

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 4: Romania v Faroe Islands.
Olympic qualifier: Honduras v Mexico (Tegucigalpa).

THURSDAY, MAY 7
International: Sweden v Poland (Stockholm).

SUNDAY, MAY 10
Olympic qualifier: United States v Canada (Bloomington, Ind.).

TUESDAY, MAY 12
International: Hungary v England (Budapest).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 5: Greece v Iceland.

THURSDAY, MAY 14
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 6: Finland v Bulgaria (Helsinki).

SUNDAY, MAY 17
Internationals: England v Brazil (Wembley), United States v Scotland (Denver).
Olympic qualifiers: Mexico v Honduras (Mexico City), Canada v United States (St John's, Newfoundland).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 4: Romania v Wales (Bucharest).
International: Canada v Scotland.

TUESDAY, MAY 26
World Cup qualifier, Europe Group 3: Republic of Ireland v Albania (Dublin).

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27
Internationals: Switzerland v France, Sweden v Hungary, Holland v Austria.

SATURDAY, MAY 30
Internationals: Holland v Wales (Amsterdam), Germany v Turkey.
US Cup '92: United States v Republic of Ireland (Washington DC).

SUNDAY, MAY 31
US Cup '92: Italy v Portugal (New Haven).

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The danger men . . . Laudrup (left) and Vialli.

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spotlight on

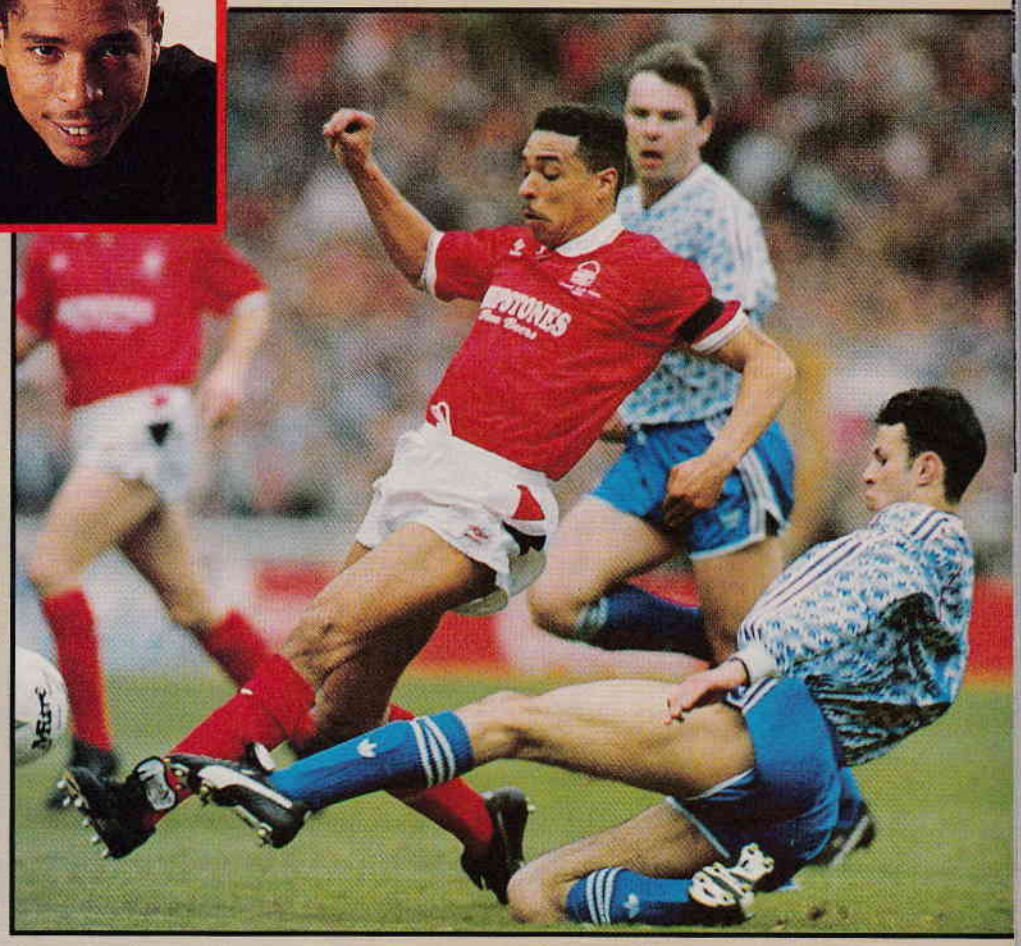
Des Walker

BY RINO LANDA

Walker heading his own goal in the 1991 FA Cup Final (right) and stopping Ryan Giggs of Manchester United in the recent Rumbelows Cup Final at Wembley (below right).

SUPERGLUE

Des sticks to top spot



WEMBLEY has become a second home to Des Walker, the Nottingham Forest and England centre-back.

He has had his share of successes there, and even the recent defeat by Manchester United in the final of the Rumbelows Cup final was not as great a disappointment as the 2-1 loss to Spurs in last season's FA Cup Final.

Walker, who so rarely makes a mistake, headed into his own net to give Spurs their victory — at the worst possible time.

The eyes of the world were upon him, because the game was televised in up to 100 countries.

For a man who had never scored a goal in League or Cups it was the cruellest twist. This slip eventually cost his club, his team-mates and manager Brian Clough their dearest ambition.

There is no doubt about Walker's talent. As former England manager Bobby Robson says: "Des is an absolutely super defender. He sticks to his man like glue and won't be beaten for pace."

Walker is not only Robson's sort of player, he's very much Brian Clough's kind: quick and intelligent on the field, silent off it.

The only occasion on which Walker had more than two words for the media was after he scored his first League goal. His delight had been evident on the pitch as — from the centre spot — he bowed to all four corners of the ground in acknowledgment.

Outside, Walker expressed his delight at scoring . . . then faded into the crowd. And that was that. He's pleasant, modest, professional — a star who enjoys everything but the consequent publicity.

To understand Walker's world means approaching from two angles. One is his; the other, inevitably is Clough's.

Mistrusted

Walker was born in East London and lived and went to school in the North London suburb of Enfield. At 15 his talent was noticed by Tottenham and Arsenal, and he boarded the bus weekly to join in schoolboy training sessions with Spurs.

Walker was a Spurs fan, but his attitude appeared anything but promising to Bill Nicholson, the former manager who was then in charge of the youth section. Walker wore his hair long, which Nicholson mistrusted, and sometimes simply forgot training and practice matches.

The manager, Keith Burkinshaw, noted that Walker was remarkably quick. But the boy's other deficiencies earned a push towards the exit. Walker, in one of his comments, would say later: "I was very disappointed. But not heartbroken. In a way, I understood their reasoning."

One man who questioned the wisdom of casting Walker adrift was the Tottenham youth development officer, John Moncur. He arranged a trial with Forest, where right-back Viv Anderson was just making his name with England. Walker was quicker and of similar build. Could he be another Anderson? On that flimsy basis, Walker was signed as a full-time professional.

Walker was not, and is not, the typical English centre-half: the giant rock off whom attackers and ball bounce.

Perversely, his refined talents have shone more brightly at a more technical international level than in the hurly-burly club world.

In 1985 he made his debut for the England Under-21s; in 1988 he made his senior debut as a substitute, against Denmark at Wembley. He has not looked back. So far Walker has played nearly 40 times for England, and at 26 (he was born on November 26, 1965) he still has a long way to go in the game.

If you believe the rumours, Walker could be off to Spain (with Real Madrid) or to Italy (with Sampdoria or Juventus). But he has not been impressed by gossip — Brian Clough makes sure his players keep their feet on the ground.

Clough was once the most voluble self-publicist in English soccer. It was almost impossible to turn on TV or open a newspaper without finding him firing off a volley of opinions on everything from politics to pitches.

Then, after Clough very nearly quit management to go into TV full-time, his approach changed. Now he carefully chooses the occasions on which he will "go public".

For example, he is the only manager in the First Division who refuses to talk to the media after a game.

Forest, alone among clubs, have no interview room. The visiting manager is granted impatient sufferance to talk to reporters in a drafty corridor between two sets of swing doors.

As for players, when they leave the sanctuary of the dressing-room corridor they open a door straight out into a crowd of autograph hunters through which they must struggle to reach the team bus (for visitors) or their car (for home players).

Reporters' chances of meaningful discussion about the match, or football in general, are virtually non-existent.

Thus Forest's players, when trapped in some corner of the car park or when on international duty, have little to say — either through lack of practice or fear of the consequences if "the boss" considers a word out of place.

They appear coached to fear the media and its lures. Walker is no different. He signs autographs, smiles shyly at his admirers, says "Hello" to reporters he knows more by sight than conversation . . . and is lost into the players' private bar or the car park.

Good game, Des? "Yeah, Good result."
Any injuries, Des? "No."
Their centre-forward did well? "Maybe."
Manager say anything at half-time? "The usual sort of thing."

Des Walker is a superb central defender. But perhaps he missed his vocation. He should have been a politician or a diplomat.

CELTIC green kings

BY PHIL **GORDON**

CELTIC are contemplating the 25th anniversary of their greatest triumph. But the past, and that magical day of May 25 1967 when they beat Internazionale to lift the Champions' Cup, seems much more comforting than the future.

Brady battles against Rangers domination

Ground for improvement . . . Celtic Park needs redevelopment to meet UEFA regulations.

The Glasgow club in the green and white have come to a crucial crossroads in their 104-year history both on and off the pitch, and they are faced with several battles that they must win if they are to recover the place they held among Europe's elite in the late 1960s and early 70s.

The key questions which the club's fanatical support want answered are:

- Can manager Liam Brady end the domestic domination of Rangers and re-establish Celtic as Scotland's top club after so long in the shadow of their great Old Firm rivals who have won five titles in the last six years?
- Can the club's directors find the money and the vision to build the new stadium that is needed and demanded by UEFA's all-seater deadline of 1994?
- Can they persuade their one genuine international player, midfielder Paul McStay, to pledge his future to Parkhead with a £2 million contract package, rather than opting for the lure of the continent or England.

Celtic ended their third successive season without a trophy, but there is cause for optimism when reviewing Brady's first season in management.

Brady, the 36-year-old former Republic of Ireland midfielder, is creating the kind of footballing side that was his hallmark as a player with such sides as Arsenal, Juventus and Internazionale.

He arrived at Celtic last summer to take over a side who had just squeezed into a UEFA Cup place in the last minute of the season.

Billy McNeill, the captain on that triumphant evening in Lisbon 25 years ago, had been sacked after a disappointing second spell as manager that failed to deliver anything like the three championships he won between 1979 and 1983 . . . the kind of success Celtic demand.

McNeill's legacy to Brady was a bloated playing staff — expensive to acquire, but mediocre in achievements.

Gradually, the new manager has ruthlessly weeded out such players. Martin Hayes, who cost £640,000 from Arsenal, is available on a free transfer.

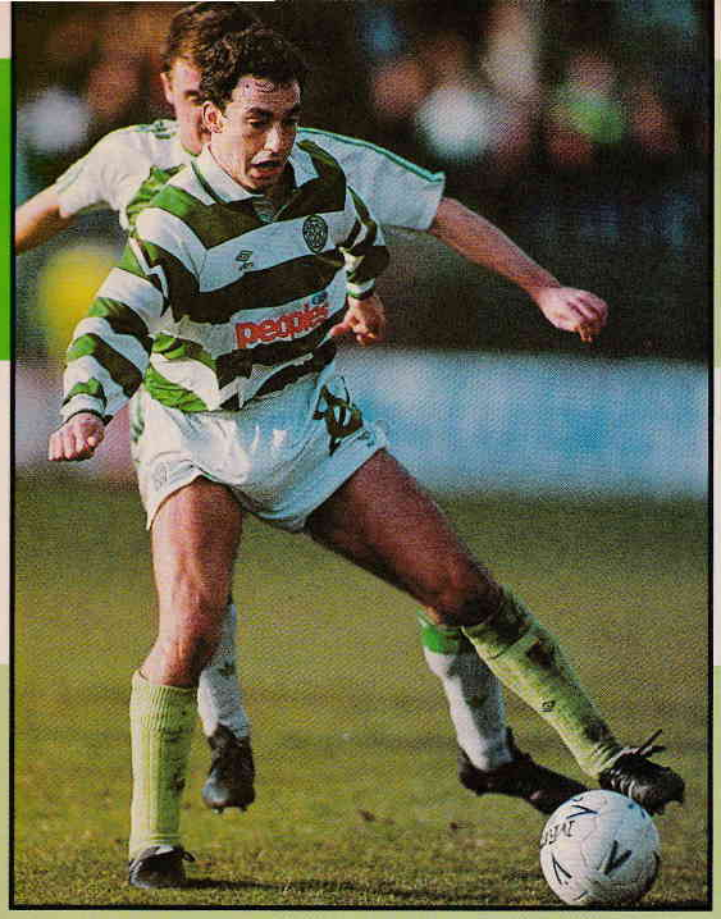
Polish striker Jacki Dziekanowski, an initial hit after his £560,000 move from Legia Warsaw, failed to maintain that form and was sold cheaply to Bristol City.

Former top scorer Andy Walker was allowed to leave for next to nothing, while John Hewitt, whose goal won Aberdeen the Cup-winners' Cup back in 1983, was given a free transfer to St. Mirren.

Brady's arrival brought the re-emergence of Charlie Nicholas, now 30, whose 27 goals was his best tally since his 50-goal season nine years ago persuaded Arsenal to lure him to London.

Brady showed he was not afraid to take difficult decisions, dropping Irish 'keeper Pat Bonner, one of the stars of Italia '90, after 12 years in the first team following a bad run which included Celtic's 5-1 UEFA Cup

Always faithful . . . Celtic fans pack the terraces.



Still on top . . . Paul McStay has defied injury to maintain his impressive form.

humiliation by Swiss side Neuchatel Xamax.

He also got rid of record buy Tony Cascarino, who scored only four goals in five months following a £1.1 million transfer from Aston Villa.

And Brady showed that he knows how to get the best out of others in the midield role that use to be his.

He watched Paul McStay return from a three-month absence with a knee injury to play some of the best football of his career, and his faith in 19-year old Brian O'Neil, one of the stars of Scotland's FIFA Under-16 World Cup finalists in '89, and Scotland under-21 striker Gerry Creaney, was repaid by performances of maturity and quality.

The football was at times breathtaking, but not all Celtic's frailties could be eradicated.

A bad losing sequence at New Year ended their title challenge while the bid to win the Scottish Cup was snuffed out by Rangers, 1-0 in a controversial semi-final.

Brady has said he won't sacrifice style for results and to a supporter brought up on the brilliance of the era under former boss Jock Stein that was comforting.

But those fans are fed up with being second to Rangers.

Neither are they keen to have the much vaunted stadium plans delayed any more. Several schemes exist to build a new 60,000 all-seat stadium but the disharmony that exists mong the club's warring directors means that little detail has emerged.

The likelihood is that the club may have to go for the cheapest option and install seats on the massive Celtic Park terracings at a cost of £30,000.

There are also takeover moves by unhappy shareholders who resent the club being run privately by the same families who controlled it a century ago.

A Scots-Canadian millionaire wants to put £17 million into the club, but his offer has not yet been taken up.

All of this is a long way from Celtic's humble beginnings in November 1887 when a Marist priest, Brother Walfrid, formed a football team to raise funds for meals for the poor children of the Victorian slums in the East End of Glasgow.

Five months later, on May 28, 1888, the club played their first home match, when they beat Rangers in front of 2,000 fans, raising £400 for charity.

Brother Walfrid can't have known what he was starting.

The club caught a spark in the large immigrant Irish community in Glasgow and soon took off.

They moved in 1892 to their present site at Celtic Park, commonly called Parkhead after the district in which it lies, and built one of the biggest stadiums in Britain.

That same season they won their first honour, the Scottish Cup, defeating Queen's Park 5-1.

Their first League title followed a year later and they took the championship three more times before the end of the century.

The legendary Willie Maley then became manager, a role he was to fulfil until 1939, by which time he'd won an amazing 16 League Championships and 14 Scottish Cups.

Six of those title wins were on the trot between 1905-10 when the legendary forward Patsy Gallacher, great grandfather of current Scotland and Coventry striker Kevin, was the idol of the fans.

The hero of the 1920s and 30s was another man with an eye for goal, Jimmy McGrory.

He scored the unequalled total of 410 goals in 408 matches after joining the club in 1922 and once scored eight goals in a game against Dunfermline.

Some of the heroic figures were also tragic, such as international 'keeper John Thompson who died after receiving a head wound in a match with Rangers in September 1931.

He tried to save at the feet of rival forward Sam English, but at the cost of his life after being kicked. Over 50,000 people turned out for his funeral.

On January 1st, 1938 the club set their record attendance in the traditional New year's Day game with Rangers when 92,000 crammed into Celtic Park.

Former idol McGrory took over as manager when the war ended in 1945, but without the same kind of success he had as a player as Celtic faded behind Rangers.

They won the Scottish Cup in 51 and then the double three years later, but success was to elude them until the centre-half in that side — Jock Stein — returned to make the club one of the most famous in Europe.

When he took over as manager from McGrory in 1965, Celtic were going nowhere.

But under him in 1966 they won the first of the nine successive league triumphs and dominated Scottish football with such talents as winger Jimmy Johnstone, midfield generals Bertie Auld and Bobby Murdoch and goal grabber Bobby Lennox.

In 1967 they swept the board in Scotland but, more importantly, smashed the domination of Latin clubs in the Champions' Cup by sweeping aside the sterility of Italy's Internazionale.

Inter's boss, Helenio Herrera, championed the infamous "catennaccio" defence, but in Lisbon Celtic took his side apart.

They had gone behind to a seventh minute penalty and Inter then defended in depth.

But superb goals by full-back Tommy Gemmell, from 25 yards, and Steve Chalmers five minutes from time, brought Celtic glory.

Three years later they were back in the final, ironically in Milan, having defeated favourites Leeds United in the semi-finals.

But Celtic underestimated Feyenoord and lost 2-1 in extra time.

Stein stepped aside as manager in 1978 to allow McNeill to take over and while the club attained further success at home they became second rate in European terms.

McNeill won the championship in 1979, 1981 and 1982 and the Cup in 1980 before leaving for Manchester City after a dispute over money.

Another former player, David Hay, took over and achieved further successes with the League title in 1986 and the Cup in '85.

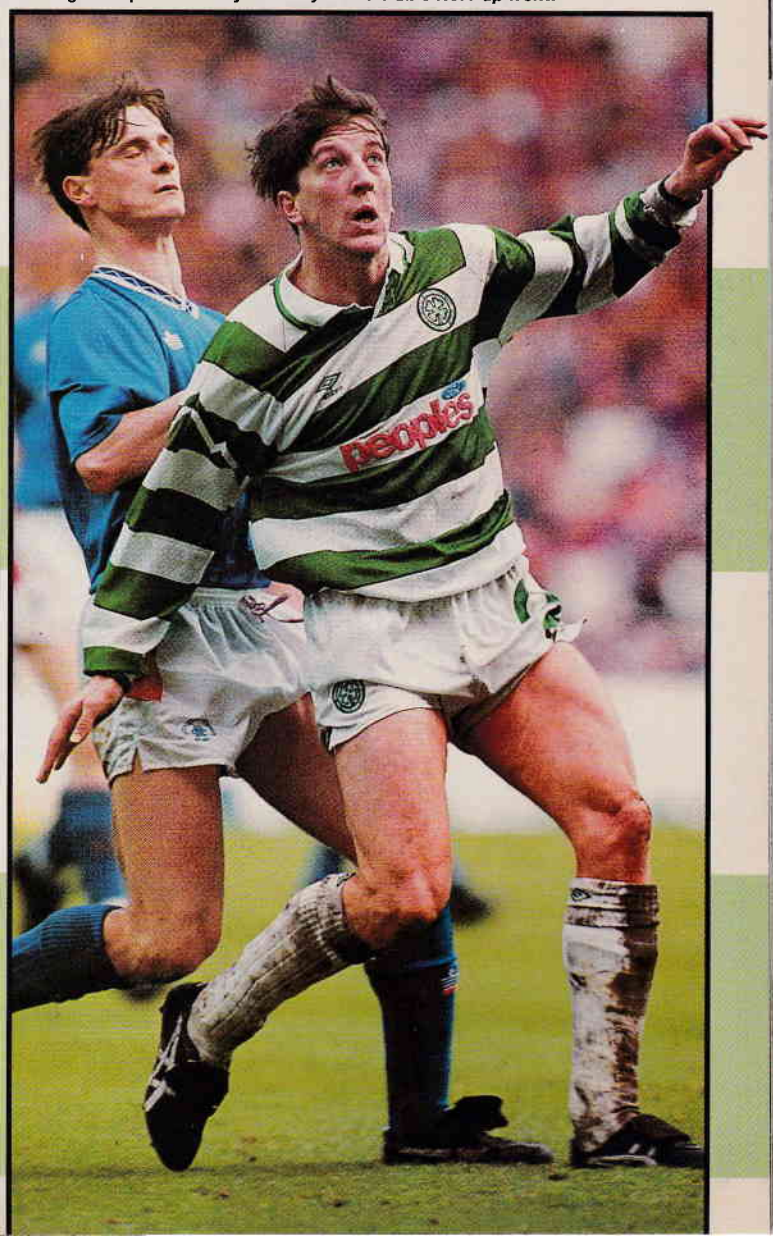
But he had his hands tied financially and when Graeme Souness swept into Ibrox on a tide of money in 1986 and Hay's under-strength side blew a ten point lead and the title in '87, Hay went.

Despite a League and Cup double in the cub's centenary year in 1988, it proved to be merely a bright moment.

Rangers were still dominating Scottish football.

Since then the Ibrox millions have ensured that they can buy the very best players to maintain their dominance and Celtic must wait and see if Liam Brady can re-work the kind of homegrown miracle that Jock Stein did.

Striking example . . . Gerry Creaney is the club's No.1 up front.



BARCELONA MAN BY MAN

FUTBOL CLUB BARCELONA
Founded: 1899
Stadium: Nou Camp (110,000)
Champions' Cup: runners-up 1961, 1986
Cup-winners' Cup: 1979, 1982, 1989; runners-up 1969, 1991
Fairs/UEFA Cup: 1958, 1960, 1966; runners-up 1962
European Super Cup: runners-up 1979, 1982, 1989
Spanish Championship: 11 titles
Spanish Cup: 21 titles
Spanish Super Cup: 1.

THE COACH
Johan CRUYFF
Aged 45 (born April 25, 1947)
The greatest Dutch footballer of all time — and proof to Graeme Souness that heart surgery need not stop a man carrying on in management at the very top.

Cruyff made his debut for Holland at 19 against Hungary and would have won rather more than his eventual total of 48 caps (33 goals) had he not been sent off in an early international against Czechoslovakia and then quit the national team before the finals of the 1978 World Cup.

Cruyff led Ajax to their Champions' Cup treble of 1971-73, captained Holland to World Cup runners-up spot in 1974 and contributed to Barcelona's image for the rest of the 1970s.

Later he played for Los Angeles Aztecs in the NASL and then back in Holland for Ajax and Feyenoord before becoming Ajax manager.

Ajax won the Dutch Cup in 1986 and 1987 and topped off the second success with the Cup-winners' Cup. He moved to Barcelona in 1988 and guided them to the Cup-winners' Cup in his first season.

Last year he signed a two-year extension to his contract before being taken ill and undergoing heart surgery. He recovered remarkably quickly and had retaken the reins in time for the victorious Cup-winners' Cup semi-final against Juventus.

Cruyff will manage Holland at the 1994 World Cup finals — assuming they qualify.

THE SQUAD
Andoni ZUBIZARRETA Urreta.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 30 (born October 23, 1961) with 61 caps.
Hopes to make up for last year when he missed the Cup-winners' Cup Final against Manchester United after collecting — for time-wasting — a second yellow card in the second leg of the semi-final against Juventus. Zubizarreta began with Alaves, stepping up into the top flight in 1981 with Bilbao. He was outstanding in 1982-3 and 1983-4 when Bilbao won first the League, then the League-and-Cup double. Zubizarreta joined Barcelona in 1986, just two days before the disastrous Champions' Cup Final defeat by Steaua (Zubizarreta could not play that one because he was ineligible). He cost a world record fee of £1.2million, signing an eight-year contract which is earning him a guaranteed minimum of £1.8million. That is the equivalent of £225,000 a year, or £4,300 a week, or (given that Barcelona play around 70 matches a year) £3,200 a game. Zubizarreta has since extended that contract until 1996. He was a member of the Spanish team beaten by England in the final of the 1984 European Under-21 Championship and made his senior debut against Finland in January 1985.

Carlos BUSQUETS Barroso.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 24 (born July 19, 1967).
Spanish youth international. Began in the Barcelona youth section, moved up in 1988 to the club's Third Division nursery team Barcelona Atletico. Promoted to the senior squad last summer and made his first-team debut (!) in last season's Cup-winners' Cup Final against Manchester United.

Jesus Maria ANGOY Gil.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 25 (born June 22, 1966).
His career has run parallel with Busquets. Angoy joined Barcelona's amateur section and was promoted to third division nursery side Barcelona Atletico in 1988. He was promoted to the first-team squad last summer.

Jose Ramon ALESANCO Ventosa.
Sweeper and club captain.
Aged 35 (born May 19, 1956) with 34 caps.
Name is also spelled Alexanco, the Basque way. Alesanco was first called into the national squad in the 1977-78 season before he had played a dozen senior League games for Bilbao. In 1980 he cost Barcelona a then domestic record of £650,000. He was a member of Barcelona's 1982 Cup-winners' Cup-winning side but has been in and out of the team over last two seasons.

Ricardo SERNA Orozco.
Fullback.
Aged 28 (born January 21, 1964) with six caps.
One of the major successes of the managerial takeover by Cruyff, who signed him in 1988 from Sevilla. Serna made his national team debut as a substitute for club-mate Beguiristain in the 4-0 victory over Northern Ireland in December 1988 back in his home city.

Ronald KOEMAN.
Centre back.
Aged 29 (born March 21, 1963) with 53 caps (10 goals) for Holland.
Signed for £3million three years ago from PSV Eindhoven and has proved a most consistent goalscorer with his penalties and free-kicks. Began with Groningen, along with brother Erwin. Together they were stalwarts of the Holland team who won the 1988 European Championship. An ankle ligament injury midway through last season upset Koeman's service with Barcelona but he recovered in record time to face Manchester United in the 1991 Cup-winners' Cup Final.

NANDO.
Full name: Fernando Munoz Garcia.
Defender
Aged 24 (born October 30, 1967) with seven caps.
Also a youth international. Big-money signing two years ago from Sevilla, his home-town club. Blotted his record when he was sent off against Manchester United in last season's Cup-winners' Cup Final after being given a torrid time by Lee Sharpe.

CRISTOBAL Parralo Aguilera.
Full-back.
Aged 24 (born August 21, 1967) with three caps.
Signed from Logrones for £1million last summer and was quickly promoted not only into Barcelona's team but into the national squad.

JUAN CARLOS Rodriguez Moreno.
Defender.
Aged 27 (born January 19, 1965) with one cap.
Experienced first division all-rounder who was signed from Atletico Madrid last summer. Juan Carlos had been transfer-listed by Atletico after joining the long list of players and coaches who have fallen out with controversial president Jesus Gil.

EUSEBIO Sacristan Mena.
Midfield.
Aged 28 (born April 13, 1964) with eight caps.
Joined Barcelona in 1988 from Atletico Madrid. They were reluctant to part with one of Spain's best young players but needed to raise money (to afford to keep Paulo Futre). Yet Atletico Madrid had themselves bought Eusebio only a year earlier from his northern home-town club, Valladolid. Eusebio (no relation to the great old Portugal star) was midfield general of the Spain team which won the European Under-21 title against Italy in 1986 .

Jose Maria BAKERO (or BAQUERO) Escudero.
Midfield/striker.
Aged 29 (born February 11, 1963) with 16 caps.
Joined Barcelona from Real Sociedad after the 1988 European finals in a £3million joint transfer along with Sociedad team-mate Aitor Beguiristain. Bakero was born in Pamplona, the town regularly in the news for the annual bull-running. Bakero scored a hat-trick against Albania on only his second appearance for his country, in November 1987 in the European qualifiers. He was twice Sociedad's top league goalscorer, with 16 goals in 1985-6 and 11 goals in 1986-87. Bakero made both Sociedad goals — for Lopez Ufarte and Beguiristain — in the 1987 Cup Final triumph over Atletico Madrid. Scored his 100th League goal towards the end of last season to earn a recall to the national squad.

In goal...Zubizarreta.

Jon Andoni GOICOECHEA (or GOIKOETXEA).
Midfield.
Aged 26 (born October 21, 1965) with seven caps.
Costly signing two years ago from Osasuna with whom he had established himself as one of the outstanding Spanish-born schemers in the first division. A member of the Spain side which beat Italy to win the European Under-21 Championship in 1986. An infrequent scorer but when he does get a goal it is generally in spectacular style.

Jose GUARDIOLA Sala.
Midfield.
Aged 21 (born January 18, 1971).
Lively midfield tyro who has replaced Real Madrid-bound Luis Milla. Guardiola is a local boy, from the Barcelona suburb of Manresa, and was promoted to the first-team squad two years ago. He played only four times last season but has been a regular this term.

Miguel Angel NADAL Homar.
Midfield.
Aged 25 (born July 28, 1966) with two caps.
Barcelona won a transfer race to sign Nadal ahead of Real and Atletico Madrid last summer from Mallorca. He has since justified their haste by making his national team debut for Spain.

Richard WITSCHGE.
Midfield.
Aged 22 (born September 20, 1969) with 17 caps (one goal) for Holland. Barcelona signed him for £3million from Ajax last summer to be a reserve de luxe (Barcelona already had Stoichkov, Laudrup and Koeman as imports). Witschge is a former Dutch Young Player of the Year who infuriated ex-Holland and Ajax boss Leo Beenhakker for his attitude.

JULIO SALINAS Fernandez.
Centre-forward.
Aged 29 (born September 11, 1962) with 29 caps.
Began with Bilbao, joined Atletico Madrid in 1986 and Barcelona in 1988. Tall, orthodox striker who first made his name in Spain's run to the Final of the 1984 European Under-21 Championship. Scored his first international goal in a morale-boosting victory over the Soviet Union in Spain's 1986 World Cup warm-up.

Aitor BEGUIRISTAIN Mujica.
Forward.
Aged 27 (born August 12, 1964) with ten caps.
Barcelona signed him in 1988 from Real Sociedad in a £3million joint transfer also featuring winger Jose Bakero. Beguiristain, whose younger brother still plays for Sociedad, began with the Basque club's nursery team.

Michael LAUDRUP.
Striker/midfield.
Aged 27 (born June 15, 1964) with 56 caps (21 goals) for Denmark.
The centre of controversy back home since he has been refusing to play for the national team until the departure of coach Richard Moller Nielsen. Laudrup began his career under the watchful eye of his father, Finn Laudrup, a former Danish international, at Brondby. All Europe's top clubs wanted him and initially he turned down Liverpool, Ajax, Anderlecht and Barcelona (!). Juventus won the race in 1983 and sent him out on loan to Lazio of Rome both to gain experience and also because their imports quota was taken up with Boniek and Platini. Laudrup was recalled in 1985 after Lazio were relegated and Boniek had been sold to Roma. Proved an instant success, starring in the World Club Cup final against Argentinos Juniors in Tokyo.

Jorge ROURA Sola.
Forward.
Aged 24 (born September 10, 1967).
Signed in 1988 from minor club Gerona Atletico.

Antonio PINILLA Miranda.
Forward.
Aged 21 (born February 25, 1971).
Promoted two years ago from the nursery team, Barcelona Atletico.

Hristo STOICHKOV.
Centre forward.
Aged 26 (born February 8, 1966) with 36 caps (five goals) for Bulgaria.
Barcelona made him the most expensive Bulgarian footballer of all time when they signed him in 1990 from CSKA Sredets for £2million. He has since trebled his value.
Barcelona's fans were surprised by coach Johan Cruyff's choice, but have since changed their minds as he has scored goals regularly for the League leaders. Last season, for example, he was Barcelona's top League scorer with 14 goals. He continued to be their outstanding individual until he was banned in midseason for what turned out to be two months for stamping on a referee's foot. Stoichkov returned last spring but then fell victim to a double attack of cartilage and/or ligament damage. He has been made a target by a number of leading Italian clubs.

Celtic

FACT BOX

Founded: 1888
Stadium: Celtic Park (53,000 capacity)
Manager: Liam Brady
Chairman: Kevin Kelly
Colours: Green and white hooped shirts, white shorts and socks.
Honours: European Cup 1968, 35 championships, 29 Scottish Cups (record).

THE MANAGER

Liam BRADY
Aged 36 (born Feb, 1956).
The former Republic of Ireland midfielder has just finished his first season in management. Despite being a top class player, Dublin-born Brady had no coaching experience when Celtic gave him the £150,000-a-year post. Brady is the record appearance holder for his country with 70 appearances and his long and successful career included a seven-year spell in Italy. He won and FA Cup medal with Arsenal and helped them to the 1980 Cup-winners' Cup Final before leaving for Juventus. In Turin he enjoyed two successive "Scudettos" before moving to Sampdoria. In 84 he was off to Internazionale where he won another title. He ended his Italian stay at Ascoli and returned to England in 1987 to West Ham. He retired from playing in 1989 and became a players agent. Among his clients were Pat Bonner, Tony Cascarino, Stuart Slater and Irish golfer Philip Walton.

THE PLAYERS

Pat BONNER
Goalkeeper.
Aged 32 (born May 25, 1960), with 54 Rep of Ireland caps.
The Irish 'keeper has had the most agonising season since joining Celtic as a teenager in 1978 from Keadue Rovers. He has lost his place to Gordon Marshall and has said that he wants to move during the summer if he is not No. 1 again. Bonner was the last signing made by Jock Stein and one of the best. Made his debut, appropriately enough, on St Patrick's Day 1978 against Motherwell, and apart from a brief spell out with injury in 1988, has been a mainstay until this term. Gained worldwide recognition for his displays with Ireland in the 1988 European Championship and 1990 World Cup.

Gordon MARSHALL
Goalkeeper.
Aged 28 (born April 19, 1964).
Bought from Falkirk for £285,000 as cover for Bonner last summer by Brady. But with Bonner's form slump Marshall has gone on to hold his place and even gain a call-up to the Scotland squad. Son of a former Nottingham Forest, Hearts, Hibs and Celtic 'keeper of 60's, he actually started out at Rangers before moving to East Fife and then Falkirk.

Chris MORRIS
Full-back.
Aged 28 (born December 24, 1963), 31 caps for Rep of Ireland.
Signed in 1987 from Sheffield Wednesday where he had been a winger. But turned into a full-back with considerable success. Eventually capped by Ireland, though he comes from Cornwall his parents are Irish, and has starred in their success over the last four years. Unsettled last year and put in a transfer request, but re-discovered his form under Brady.

Mark McNALLY
Defender.
Age 21 (born March 20, 1971).
Reliable defender who broke through last season under Billy McNeill. This Scotland Under-21 is a product of Celtic's phenomenal Boys' Clubs system. Has been out with injury for the second half of the season but will put in a challenge next term.

Tom BOYD
Defender.
Age 26, (born November 24, 1965), 8 Scotland caps.
Boyd arrived at Celtic in January from Chelsea in a swap deal for flop Tony Cascarino. He and his wife had failed to settle in London after last summer's £800,000 move from Motherwell and he grabbed the chance to join his boyhood idols. A strong left-sided defender, he likes to surge forward and can play in midfield. He captained Motherwell to their Scottish Cup triumph last year before leaving and has become a big hit with Celtic fans since returning north.

Tony MOWBRAY
Centre-back.
Age 28 (born November 20, 1963).
The giant centre-back was sought by Brady as the answers to defensive problems when he bought him from Middlesbrough, where he had spent all his career, last November for £1.1million after a 5-1 UEFA Cup humbling by Neuchatel. Strong and brave, at Middlesbrough he formed a great partnership with Gary Pallister. Mowbray has gone some way to filling the gap left by the sale of hero Paul Elliott to Chelsea. His rugged leadership is the kind players respect.

Derek WHYTE
Centre-half.
Age 23 (born August 31, 1968), 3 caps.
Despite his age, he has been around the Celtic first team for six years. Burst through at 17 and was capped at 18. Despite being a very skilful defender, his lack of concentration and overuse of the ball had caused many to predict that he would fail to fulfil his talent. But he has re-emerged this season and justified Brady's faith in him to the extent that he is back in the Scotland squad. Started out with Celtic Boys Club.

Gary GILLESPIE
Centre-half.
Age 31 (born July 7, 1960),13 caps.
A surprise signing when he came from Liverpool last August for £925,000, which many though was a high price given his age and injury record. A classy defender who likes to pass the ball out of defence, he started with Falkirk before moving to Coventry at the age of 18, and then to Liverpool in '83 for £325,000. Won three championships at Anfield before coming to the club he supported as a boy.

Mike GALLOWAY
Centre-half/Midfielder.
Age 26 (born May 30, 1965).
Another to re-emerge from the doldrums under Brady, he came to Celtic for £500,000 from Hearts in 1989 where he had been very successful as a goal-getting midfielder in their UEFA Cup run that season. But failed to spark at Parkhead and was transfer-listed and would have been away had someone paid the cash for him. Stayed and played himself back into team. Tough and adaptable, playing often at centre-back as well as midfield, with an eye for goal. Began his career with English Fourth Division club Halifax before a £60,000 move to Hearts.

Dariusz WDOWCYZK
Centre-half.
Age 29 (born September 25, 1962), 56 caps for Poland.
Former Polish international captain who came from Legia Warsaw for £465,000 in 1989 to join up with compatriot Dziekanowski. Has settled off the park and often capable of great displays on it but not consistent. He has been out of the side in the latter half of the season and may move in the summer.

Peter GRANT
Midfielder.
Age 26 (born August 30, 1965), 2 caps.
Another product of Celtic Boys Club, he looks set to leave the club. His rashness has often caused him problems. A ban for a sending off spiked his chances of a move to Norwich, but he is a committed club man who loves Celtic. Midfielder who had his best year in the double season of '88.

Steven FULTON
Midfielder.
Age 21 (born August 20, 1970).
Came through the youth ranks and is a fine left-footed midfielder who made his first team debut at the age of 18, evoking comparisons with Dalglish. But he has failed to live up to that standard and has flitted in and out of the side this season. The Scotland under-21 cap tends to have a weight problem and fitness is often suspect.

John COLLINS
Midfielder.
Age 24 (born Janaury 31, 1968), 7 caps.
Collins was bought from Hibs for £1million in 1990 when Celtic fought off competition from Rangers and Bordeaux. He is a natural footballer despite being raised in Scotland's rugby heartland of The Borders. A Hibs player at 17, he scored on his Scotland debut in Saudi Arabia when aged 20. Great prospect who also scored the vital European Championship goal against Bulgaria last year. Was disappointed not to play in the 1990 World Cup finals and has yet to break through properly into the international side.

Paul McSTAY
Midfielder.
Age 27 (born October 22, 1964), 54 caps.
The jewel in Celtic's crown. This playmaker is the best player at Parkhead since Dalglish, making his debut at 17 and becoming the second youngest cap at the age of 18 — behind Denis Law — against Uruguay in 1983. His elder brother Willie starred with him in Celtic sides of the mid-80's and now younger brother Raymond is in the reserve ranks. Celtic turned down a bid from Inter Milan for him in 1986. Currently in a contract dilemma, his deal ends in June and Celtic are trying to persuade him to sign for life with a £2million package.

Bryan O'NEIL
Midfielder.
Age 19 (born September 6, 1972).
Talented passing midfielder in the McStay mould. O'Neil has not disappointed since being given his chance by Brady. He was a key member of the Scots Under-16 side which went to the FIFA Youth World Cup in 1989 where he unfortunately missed two penalties. Now an Under-21 player who outshone German prospect Gerhard Poschner in the recent clash. A great prospect for the future.

Joe MILLER
Winger.
Age 24 (born December 8, 1967).
A prodigiously talented teenager who has failed to match his start. Though Celtic daft, he was snapped up by Aberdeen where he became a teenage sensation. Celtic grabbed him from under noses of Manchester United with a £650,000 fee in 1987 and he helped them to win the title. But this tricky winger is inconsistent,witness the fact that he's failed to add to his seven under-21 caps.

Charlie NICHOLAS (left)
Forward.
Age 30 (born December 10, 1961), 20 caps.
A phenomenal goalscorer, Nicholas was the most talented Celt of his era when he emerged as an 18-year-old in 1980. Helped Celtic to two titles before succumbing to the lure of Arsenal and moved for £750,000 in 1983 after he'd hit 50 goals for Celtic that season. Though his talent was appreciated by fans at Highbury it was not by manager George Graham and he sold the gifted Charlie to Aberdeen in 1988 for £500,000. At Pittodrie, he came back to something like his best before Celtic brought him back in 1990 for £400,000. Has enjoyed a great season in the scoring charts — his best since '83, but sadly, still ignored by national boss Andy Roxburgh for whom he last played three years ago.

Gerry CREANEY
Forward.
Age 22 (born April 13, 1970).
Scotland's young striking star of this season, he has hit nearly 30 goals for club and country. A youth side product, this intelligent forward emerged in 1989, but burst into life in 1990-91. Suffered a bit at the beginning of this season and was passed over for new buy Cascarino, but has fought back to become No. 1 striker. His goals helped Scotland under-21s defeat Germany.

Tommy COYNE
Forward.
Age 29 (born November 14, 1962). 1 Republic of Ireland cap.
Started Clydebank before moving to Dundee United in 1984. Could not hold down a place and then moved to neighbours Dundee, where he hit 35 league goals in 1988 to win a coveted adidas/ Shoot Golden Shoe Award. This prompted Celtic to spend £500,000 on him. Failed to recover that form at Parkhead and was set to leave the club last year for just £200,000 when he regained place and goal form. Has since become a Republic of Ireland cap, thanks to his Irish grandparents.

Heads I win . . . John Collins in action against Rangers.

SAMPDORIA MAN BY MAN

SAMPDORIA UNION CALCIO SpA
Founded: 1946
Stadium: Luigi Ferraris (43,868)
Cup-winners' Cup: 1990; runners-up 1989
European Super Cup: runners-up 1990
Italian league: once (1991)
Italian Cup: three titles

THE COACH
Vujadin BOSKOV.
Aged 60 (born in Novisad, Yugoslavia, on May 9, 1931).
Former Yugoslav international wing-half who played 512 times for Vojvodina before signing for Sampdoria in 1961. A star of the 1954 World Cup finals, he played only an unlucky 13 League matches for Sampdoria before his career was halted by injury. Boskov joined the lengthy ranks of Yugoslavia's outstanding coaching exports. He started with Young Boys of Switzerland then returned home with Vojvodina for ten years. After that he coached Ajax and Feyenoord (in Holland), Real Zaragoza, Real Madrid and Sporting Gijon (in Spain) and then Ascoli (in Italy) before joining Sampdoria five years ago. Moves to Roma at the season's end.

THE SQUAD
Gianluca PAGLIUCA.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 25 (born December 18, 1966) with four caps.
Rivalling Walter Zenga for Italy's national team place. Pagliuca made his Italy debut as a second-half substitute for Zenga in the final of the Scania 100 tournament in Sweden in June last year. He then produced a decisive save in the penalty shoot-out victory over the Soviet Union. Yet he had failed to make the grade with his home-town club, Bologna, and joined Sampdoria for next-to-nothing in 1986. Spent one more season on the sidelines before establishing himself over the past three seasons. First earned international recognition when he was Italy's No 3 keeper in the World Cup finals.

Giulio NUCIARI.
Goalkeeper.
Aged 32 (born April 26, 1960).
Has made a career out of being a reserve — mostly to ex-Italy goalkeeper Giovanni Galli at Milan. Also played for minor clubs Montecatini and Ternana and joined Sampdoria three years ago from Monza.

Marco LANNA.
Sweeper.
Aged 23 (born July 13, 1968).
One of the few Genoa-born players in the Sampdoria squad. Lanna was promoted from the youth section four years ago. Originally a right back.

Moreno MANNINI.
Right-back or stopper.
Aged 29 (born August 15, 1962) with two caps.
Comes from a town better known for motor racing than soccer, Imola. Played first for the local team in the Fourth Division, then progressed steadily via third division Forli and Second Division Como before joining Sampdoria in 1984. A member of the Italy team who recently beat Germany 1-0 in Turin.

Pietro VIERCHOWOD.
Centre back.
Aged 33 (born April 6, 1959) with 39 caps.

In goal... Pagliuca.

In charge... Mannini.

Son of a Russian emigre father. In and out of the national squad for a decade since making his Italy debut against Holland in the Gold Cup tournament in Uruguay in January 1981. Vierchowod has played First Division football for Como, Fiorentina, Roma and, since 1983, for Sampdoria — where coach Boskov has even used him at centre-forward. A member of the Italy team who beat England 2-1 in the third place play-off at the 1990 World Cup.

Ivano BONETTI.
Left-back.
Aged 27 (born August 1, 1964).
New arrival last summer from relegated Bologna. His experience has been important in Europe, since Bonetti's career has also spanned spells with Brescia, Genoa, three years at Juventus and Atalanta. Brother Dario is also in the squad — the first time an Italian club has brought brothers this far in Europe together.

Alessandro ORLANDO.
Defender.
Aged 21 (born June 1, 1970).
Costly signing from Udinese last year although he had established himself there only the previous season. Orlando also had a spell out on loan to Parma. His move to Sampdoria was considered the domestic transfer coup of 1991.

Dario BONETTI.
Defender.
Aged 30 (born August 5, 1961).
Like brother Ivano, also with Sampdoria, he includes Juventus among his past clubs. Bonetti also played for Brescia, Roma, Sampdoria (1982-83), Roma, Milan and Verona. He rejoined Sampdoria last summer after two seasons as a Juventus reserve. First played in European competition with Roma back in 1981-82.

Fausto PARI.
Midfield.
Aged 29 (born September 15, 1962).
Former youth international. Joined Inter at 17 but, after playing one League game in two seasons, left on a free transfer to Parma (then in the Third Division). Improved by leaps and bounds under Arrigo Sacchi (later Milan's European Cup-winning coach) and transferred to Sampdoria in 1983.

TONINHO CEREZO (Antonio Carlos Cerezo).
Midfield.
Aged 37 (born April 21, 1955) with 58 caps for Brazil.
Adopted son of a clown, who turned professional in 1974. Cerezo was a member of Brazil's World Cup squads in both 1978 and 1982, missed 1986 through hamstring trouble and 1990 through age. Made his name back home with Atletico Mineiro and moved to Italy with Roma in 1983. His prospective partnership with fellow Brazilian Paolo Roberto Falcao in midfield lasted only one year: then Roma lost to Liverpool on penalties in the Champions' Cup Final. In 1986 Cerezo inspired Roma's exciting but ultimately vain bid to overtake Juventus at the top of the table. When he was suspended just before the season's end after being sent off for dissent, Roma fell apart. Cerezo was sold to Sampdoria where he discovered his second footballing youth and remains a highly influential player while, simultaneously, helping out with coaching.

Giovanni INVERNIZZI.
Midfield.
Aged 28 (born August 22, 1963).
Discovered by his home-town club, Como, with whom he played virtually all his career until joining Sampdoria in 1989. Invernizzi spent two years, 1982-84, out on loan to Reggiana.

Srecko KATANEC.
Midfield.
Aged 28 (born July 17, 1963) with 28 caps for Yugoslavia.
Has now withdrawn from the Yugoslav national team because he comes from newly-independent Slovenia. Katanec was born in Ljubljana and made his name with local First Division club Olimpija. He was turned into an international by Dinamo Zagreb and became a pillar of the national team after switching to Partizan, the army club, while undertaking his national service. Katanec was a big success in Germany with Stuttgart before moving to Italy three years ago. Missed much of last season through injury and erratic form.

Paolo SILAS do Prado Pereira.
Midfield.
Aged 26 (born August 27, 1965) with 26 caps (and one goal) for Brazil. Signed last year from relegated Cesena, for whom he scored three goals in 26 games last term. He is being groomed to substitute for the veteran Toninho Cerezo. Silas starred in the Brazilian side who won the 1985 World Youth Cup in the Soviet Union and made his senior debut against Hungary in Budapest a year later. He was a member of Brazil's squad at both the 1986 and 1990 World Cups and moved to Italy via Sao Paulo (Brazil) and Sporting Clube (Portugal). Sporting had to release him when a financial crisis meant they could not afford to pay his wages.

Giorgio ZANUTTA.
Midfield/defender.
Aged 18 (born July 28, 1973).
Signed last summer from Udinese.

Attilio LOMBARDO.
Forward.
Aged 26 (born January 6, 1966) with five caps (one goal).
Joined Sampdoria three years ago from Cremonese — where they had earlier found Vialli. One of the revelations of last season. His destructive pace helped take attacking pressure off Vialli and Mancini as well as earning a call-up for Italy. Lombardo made a goal-scoring senior debut in Italy's 4-0 European Championship win over Cyprus in December, 1990.

Roberto MANCINI.
Centre-forward.
Aged 27 (born November 27, 1964) with 28 caps (one goal).
One of Italy's outstanding forwards. Mancini joined Bologna as a 13-year-old and made his First Division debut for them four years later against Cagliari (both clubs bound for relegation and financial disaster). Sampdoria immediately signed him for a teenage record fee of £2million and he scored nine goals in his first season. Mancini made his international debut in a friendly against Canada in Toronto in May, 1986. An Italy regular at the 1988 European finals, but an unused substitute at the 1990 World Cup. Mancini was Sampdoria's second-highest scorer last season with 12 goals.

Gianluca VIALLI.
Striker.
Aged 27 (born July 9, 1964) with 53 caps (13 goals).
Major talent who emerged in the 1985-86 season. Born in Cremona and played for the local team, Cremonese, until Sampdoria spotted his potential in 1984. Outstanding member of the Italian team which beat holders England to reach the final of the 1986 European Under-21 Championship (Italy lost on penalties to Spain in the final). Milan appeared on the verge of buying him but Sampdoria president Paolo Mantovani got cold feet at the last moment, fearing the fans' wrath. He established his world-class potential in the 1988 European Championship but was a major disappointment at the 1990 World Cup. Vialli has been Sampdoria's top League scorer for three years in a row. He scored 10 goals in 1987-88, then 14 in 1988-89 and 19 in 1990-91 — when he was also the League's top marksman. Suspect temperament: he was sent off in Italy's friendly against Bulgaria at the start of the season, then again in Sampdoria's Italian Cup semi-final first leg against Parma.

Renato BUSO.
Forward.
Aged 22 (born December 19, 1969).
Signed last summer from the 1990 UEFA Cup finalists, Fiorentina. One of Italy's most promising young forwards, who was originally discovered at 15 by Juventus playing for minor club Montebelluna. Last season Buso was Fiorentina's joint second-top scorer . . . with five goals.

spotlight on

Sergei *Aleinikov*

VETERAN midfielder Sergei Aleinikov did not expect to figure in the plans being made by Commonwealth of Independent States coach Anatoli Bishovets.

Teacher . . . Eduard Malofeyev is Aleinikov's mentor and his former coach at Minsk Dynamo.

Still going strong

BY NICK **BIDWELL**

"I thought I had played my last international when we were eliminated at the preliminary stage of Italia '90," says Aleinikov — who made his senior debut for the former Soviet Union against West Germany back in 1984.

"I never got into my stride in those World Cup finals, and produced three mediocre performances.

"Valeri Lobanovsky was replaced as national team manager by Anatoli Bishovets, and it was clear that he intended changes.

"Much to my surprise, Bishovets continued to pick me for the European Championship qualifiers. I feared that my international prospects would suffer when my Italian club, Lecce, were relegated last year.

"Even then Bishovets kept faith with me.

"I'll always appreciate the confidence he has shown in me."

Bishovets has successfully blooded newcomers such as Kulkov, Kanchelskis, Yuran and Kolyvanov. But he also is aware of the valuable contribution made by Aleinikov.

"The early exit from the 1990 World Cup did not mean that the entire team had to be discarded," says Bishovets.

"Experienced and talented players like Aleinikov, Protasov and Mikhailichenko all deserve to remain in my team.

"Aleinikov is a quiet character, but is a tremendous steadying influence for the younger players. He works very hard.

"It does not matter that he is playing in the Italian Serie B with Lecce. He will be an important player for us if we take part in the European finals."

While political and sporting

Sergei deserves Euro chance

confusion reigns in the old Soviet Union, and many people are unsure of the CIS team's participation in Sweden, Aleinikov is a firm advocate of CIS involvement.

"In eight qualifying matches we earned the right to go to Sweden," he argues. "Our players should have the opportunity to take part.

"After all, both FIFA and UEFA have backed us. And although the Ukraine want independent membership of FIFA, the Ukrainian Federation are happy for their players to represent the CIS."

Sergei Aleinikov was born in Minsk, capital of the Republic of Byelorussia, on November 7, 1961, and at the age of 10 he joined the local Dyussh 5 soccer club. Two years later he was recruited by Minsk Dynamo and in July 1981 he made his first-team debut, against CSKA Rostov.

"As a youngster I dreamed of playing for Minsk," says Aleinikov. "When the coach, Eduard Malofeyev, selected me for the senior side, it was one of the most exciting moments of my life.

"I did not play particularly well on my debut. But my manager was satisfied and I stayed in the first team until the end of the season. Malofeyev was like a second father to me. He taught me so much, and helped me to mature."

Under Malofeyev — a Soviet forward in the 1966 World Cup — Minsk became known for their all-out attacking style, and that philosophy helped them to the 1982 title.

"We went into the last game trailing Kiev Dynamo by one point," says Aleinikov. "But Kiev lost their final match and we clinched the title by winning 4-3 at Moscow Spartak. It was the club's first championship."

In 1984 Malofeyev left to take charge of the Soviet Olympic team, and called up the Minsk trio of Aleinikov, fellow midfielder Gotsmanov and defender Zigmantovich.

The Soviets duly qualified for the Los Angeles Games,

He rarely wins a lot of praise

but the Soviet government decided to boycott the event.

Despite missing the Olympics, Aleinikov had every reason to be satisfied with his progress. In the spring of 1984 he had made his full international debut, against West Germany in Hanover, and showed much promise despite a 2-1 defeat.

Aleinikov went on to help the Soviet Union reach the 1986 World Cup finals and played in all four of his nation's matches in Mexico.

But the all-action Soviet style of play was not suited to the rarified atmosphere of Mexico. The team ran out of steam and lost a second-round thriller, 4-3 to Belgium.

"That was a great disappointment," says Aleinikov. "We dominated for long periods, but failed to take our chances. Nor did we have any luck with refereeing decisions."

Two years later his creative midfield work was much in evidence as the Soviets reached the final of the 1988 European Championship. Then, against Holland, regular centre-back Oleg Kuznetsov was suspended and coach Valeri Lobanovski decided to use Aleinikov to mark striker Marco Van Basten.

While he struggled in his new role, Van Basten first made Ruud Gullit's opener and then scored with a remarkable volley to seal Holland's 2-0 victory.

"People have criticised Lobanovski's decision to give me the task of marking Van Basten," says Aleinikov. "But someone had to do the job.

"I play where I am told. I do not seek explanations for a manager's decision. I prefer midfield, but I always put the needs of the team first."

After nine seasons in the Minsk first team — 220 Soviet League games and 31 goals — Aleinikov joined Juventus in 1989, in a £1.7 million deal.

Juve won both UEFA and Italian Cups in 1990, with Aleinikov and compatriot Sasha Zavarov surplus to requirements. Zavarov signed with Nancy in France, while Aleinikov joined Lecce in southern Italy.

"Sergei Aleinikov is one of football's unsung heroes," says his former mentor, Malofeyev. "He rarely wins a lot of praise, but he is the sort of skilful and unselfish player that every team needs."

Cup Winners' Cup
May 6
in Lisbon

EVERYTHING TO PLAY FOR . . .

By KEIR **RADNEDGE**

THE European Cup-winners' Cup, or Recopa as the economic Spanish call it, has an image problem.

The British rate it because it reflects the obvious development of the Home Countries' love of knock-out soccer.

But it remains a second-class event as far as most of the rest of Europe is concerned. It was the last of the three European tournaments to be launched and a poor turn-out in Lisbon this time to see Werder Bremen play Monaco — not the most stirring of attractions — could turn the final into a two-leg event in future years.

Both are worthy teams. Bremen have been long-time European campaigners, and reached the UEFA Cup semi-final in 1990; Monaco have a certain cachet, courtesy of their Monte Carlo home, but minimal crowd support.

At press time both clubs appear poised to finish honourably in their respective leagues. Monaco chase Marseille's coat-tails in France; Bremen sit comfortably in the top half of the table in neighbouring Germany.

More than ever, this year's Cup-winners' Cup serves as a reminder that many European countries launched cup tournaments only to cash in, literally, on the development of the Cup-winners' Cup.

The second European club event was launched in season 1960-61. The first match, with heavy irony considering the competition's standing now, was played in East Berlin on August 1, with Vorwarts of East Germany beating Rude Hvezda of Czechoslovakia 2-1.

Marco Bode of Werder Bremen.

Domestic Cup

Believe it or not, ten European nations — one third of UEFA's then membership — did not run a domestic cup. These were not only minnow countries, either, but included Belgium, Poland, Sweden and Turkey.

Why, then, is the Cup-winners' Cup officially ranked above the higher-quality UEFA Cup? Simple. Entry depends on winning a domestic trophy, not finishing among the title also-rans.

Next season, the Cup-winners' Cup will change format. UEFA have decided to adopt here, too, the semi-final mini-leagues system tried out this term in the Champions' Cup.

That borders on the absurd: how can anyone justify turning a knock-out cup for teams which have won knock-out cups into a league contest? It's a sporting travesty and just illustrates the cockeyed thinking (or lack of it) involved in the transmutation.

Perhaps the absurdity will be lost on most of the continent. After all, in many countries the cup is more akin to the English and Scottish League Cups. Only clubs from the First and Second Divisions compete. Not the village green amateurs or even part-timers.

Italy and Spain adopt this restrictive format. Only France throws its cup net as wide as possible — even including clubs from French colonies in the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Fortunately, the federation picks up the travel bill for any of those far-flung clubs who do qualify for the first round proper and have to come to Europe.

Fans abroad do not thrill to the cup, as do the English. And not only the fans: few clubs are enchanted by the prospect of cup football.

The first round of the Italian Cup is played in August, before the league season starts. Many clubs rest their star players to protect them from the threat of injury. The matches are used as warm-ups rather than serious competition.

Once the league is up and running, all Italian Cup-ties are played on a two-leg basis in midweek. The Italian Cup Final itself is also played over two legs. But that is an improvement on the situation at the end of the 1960s when the cup — almost as a contradiction in terms — was decided by . . . mini-league.

On one hand, lack of Italian interest is contradictory. In several countries such as Italy, Spain and Sweden, the "championship" began as a knock-out competition.

Only with the advent of professionalism in the late 1920s were the national leagues launched. The cups then became something of an anachronism and were duly relegated.

In so many countries, the cup has never quite recovered. Bremen and Monaco will be playing not only for themselves but for the credibility of an entire concept.

CUP-WINNERS' CUP FINALS

Year	Opponents	Res	Venue	Att
1961*	Rangers v Fiorentina	0-2	Glasgow	80,000
1961	Fiorentina v Rangers	2-1	Florence	40,000
1962	Atletico Madrid v Fiorentina	1-1 (aet)	Glasgow	30,000
Replay	Atletico Madrid v Fiorentina	3-0	Stuttgart	39,000
1963	Tottenham Hotspur v Atletico Madrid	5-1	Rotterdam	50,000
1964	Sporting Lisbon v MTK Budapest	3-3 (aet)	Brussels	4,000
Replay	Sporting Lisbon v MTK Budapest	1-0	Antwerp	14,000
1965	West Ham United v TSV Munich 1860	2-0	Wembley	98,000
1966	Borussia Dortmund v Liverpool	2-1 (aet)	Glasgow	42,000
1967	Bayern Munich v Rangers	1-0 (aet)	Nurnberg	70,000
1968	AC Milan v Hamburg SV	2-0	Rotterdam	54,000
1969	Slovan Bratislava v Barcelona	3-2	Basle	40,000
1970	Manchester City v Gornik Zabrze	2-1	Vienna	10,000
1971	Chelsea v Real MAdrid	1-1 (aet)	Athens	42,000
Replay	Chelsea v Real Madrid	2-1	Athens	24,000
1972	Rangers v Moscow Dynamo	3-2	Barcelona	35,000
1973	AC Milan v Leeds United	1-0	Salonika	45,000
1974	FC Magdeburg v AC Milan	2-0	Rotterdam	5,000
1975	Kiev Dynamo v Ferencvaros	3-0	Basle	13,000
1976	Anderlecht v West Ham United	4-2	Brussels	58,000
1977	Hamburg SV v Anderlecht	2-0	Amsterdam	65,000
1978	Anderlecht v FK Austria	4-0	Paris	48,679
1979	Barcelona v Fortuna Dusseldorf	4-3 (aet)	Basle	58,000
1980	Valencia v Arsenal	0-0	Brussels	40,000
		5-4 (pens)		
1981	Dynamo Tbilisi v Carl Zeiss Jena	2-1	Dusseldorf	9,000
1982	Barcelona v Standard Liege	2-1	Barcelona	100,000
1983	Aberdeen v Real Madrid	2-1	Gothenburg	17,804
1984	Juventus v FC Porto	2-1	Basle	60,000
1985	Everton v Rapid Vienna	3-1	Rotterdam	50,000
1986	Kiev Dynamo v Atletico Madrid	3-0	Lyon	39,300
1987	Ajax v Lokomotive Leipzig	1-0	Athens	35,000
1988	Mechelen v Ajax	1-0	Strasbourg	39,446
1989	Barcelona v Sampdoria	2-0	Berne	45,000
1990	Sampdoria v Anderlecht	2-0 (aet)	Gothenburg	20,103
1991	Manchester United v Barcelona	2-1	Rotterdam	42,000

* = final over two legs.

CHAMPIONS' CUP
Semi-finals, Group A
(April 1)
Panathinaikos 0
Anderlecht 0
Att: 17,000. **Ref:** Worrall (Eng)
Panathinaikos: Wandzik - Apostolakis, Karageorgiu, Christodolu, Kurbanas, Mavridis, Saravakos, Antoniu, K Warzycha, Borelli (Donis 70), Georgamlis (Athanasiadis 74)
Anderlecht: Maes - Crasson, Kooiman, Rutjes, Dewolf, Walem, B Versavel (Van Baekel 70), Oliveira, Degryse, Nilis (Verheyen 57), Boffin.

● Panathinaikos ran the game but were foiled time and again by Anderlecht's reserve goalkeeper, Peter Maes. He made fine saves from Leonidas Christodolu (four mins), Dimitris Saravakos (31) and Juan Jose Borelli (39). Christodolu also hit a post in the first half, as did Donis in the second. Anderlecht's best chance fell to Degryse after 15 minutes, but he headed over. This result meant neither team had any chance of reaching the final.

Red Star Belgrade 1 (Sinisa Mihajlovic 19)
Sampdoria 3 (Srecko Katanec 34, Goran Vasilijevic og 42), Roberto Mancini 77)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 35,000 (in Sofia). **Ref:** Rosa dos Santos (Por)
Red Star: Milojevic - Radinovic (Ivic 75), Vasilijevic, Nedeljkovic, Belodedic, Ratkovic, Bolic, Jugovic, Pancev, Savicevic (Cula 82), Mihajlovic.
Sampdoria: Pagliuca - Dario Bonetti, Katanec, Pari, Vierchowod, Lanna, Lombardo, Cerezo (Invernizzi 10), Vialli, Mancini, Ivano Bonetti.

● Sampdoria's magnificent victory took them within reach of a place in the final and left defending title-holders Red Star staring elimination in the face. Red Star got off to an excellent start with a 19th minute goal from a free-kick by Mihajlovic. Yugoslav international Srecko Katanec — he has now declared himself for Slovenia — equalised with a deflected shot on a pass from Mancini. Vasilijevic then scored an own goal as he tried to foil Vialli. Mancini wrapped up the scoring 13 minutes from the end after taking a return pass from Vialli.

Group B
Benfica 5 (Cesar Brito 25, 62, Isaias 71, Yuran 83, 87)
Kiev Dynamo 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Van der Ende (Hol)
Benfica: Neno - Jose Carlos, Paudo Madeira, William, Velosos, Thern, Vitor Paneira (Rui Costa 75), Schwarz, Pacheco (Isaias 61), Yuran, Cesar Brito.
Kiev: Martinkenas - Betsa, Tsveiba, Anenkov, Besmertni, Gritsina, Zaets, Yakovenko - Salenko, Sharan (Matveyev 81), Kvitkauskas (Volotiok 46).

● Benfica struck a path back into contention for a place at Wembley on May 20 thanks to their thrashing of bottom-of-the-table Kiev. To add insult to injury for Kiev, it was Sergei Yuran — the striker they sold to Benfica last summer — who did the two-goal damage in the last seven minutes of play.

Sparta Prague 1 (Horst Siegl 66)
Barcelona 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27, 374. **Ref:** Karlsson (Swe)
Sparta: Kouba - Chovanec - Hornak, Novotny, Vrabec (Matta 77) - Mistr, Nemecek, Frydek, Vonasek - Cerny, Siegl (Joksimovic 90).
Barcelona: Zubizarreta - Koeman - Nando, Serna - Eusebio, Guardiola (Nadal 74), Bakero, Laudrup, Witschge - Salinas (Goikotxea 74), Beguiristain.

● Barcelona's first defeat in the five matches of the semi-final groups mean they still need to beat Benfica in their last game to be sure of reaching the final. On the other hand, if Benfica win in Spain the Portuguese could go through instead. Vonasek hit the post and Vrabec the angle just before Sparta took the lead in the 66th minute when Siegl converted a pass from Cerny. Three minutes later Siegl shot against the post from a tight angle.

CUP-WINNERS' CUP
Semi-finals, 1st legs
(April 1)
Club Brugge 1 (Daniel Amokachi 5)
Werder Bremen 0
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 21,000. **Ref:** Spassov (Bul)
Brugge: Verlinden - Beyens, Querter, Plovie (Vanmaele 53), Cossey, Borkelmans, Staelens, Van der Elst, Van der Heyden, Booy, Amokachi.
Bremen: Reck (Rollman 69) - Bratseth, Otten, Borowka, Bockenfeld, Votava (Schaaf 76), Wolter, Legat, Bode, Neubarth, Rufer.

● Nigerian youngster Amaokachi scored the only goal after five minutes, the 19-year-old converting a cross from Vital Borkelmans. But that was not an end to the drama. In the 69th minute Bremen goalkeeper Oliver Reck had to be helped off after what first appeared an injury suffered from being hit by a missile from the crowd. Later, however, Reck said he had been injured in a collision with Booy.

Monaco 1 (Patrick Valery 25)
Feyenoord 1 (Rob Witschge 8)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** McGinlay (Sco)
Monaco: Ettori - Valery, Thuram, Mendy, Sonor - Rui Barros, Dib (Gnako 74), Puel, Passi - Weah, Fofana (Djorkaeff 60).
Feyenoord: De Goey - Van Gobbel, Fraser, Metgod, Ruud Heus - Scholten, Troost, Witschge - Taument, Kiprich (Griga 74), Blinker.

● Monaco outplayed Feyenoord for most of the game and had the better chances. But they failed to press their advantage home — as in the 24th minute when Rui Barros, standing behind the goalkeeper, saw his shot cleared off the line by Koeman. Witschge's free kick brought Feyenoord a surprise early lead. Monaco hit back with a volley from Valery - the first goal conceded by Feyenoord in Europe this term.

UEFA CUP
Semi-finals, 1st legs
(April 1)
Genoa 2 (Carlos Aguilera 73, 80)
Ajax 3 (Petersson 1, Roy 60, Winter 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 39,000. **Ref:** Kim Nilton Nielsen (Den)
Genoa: Braglia - Torrente (Iorio 86), Branco, Eranio, Caricola, Signorini, Ruotolo, Bortolazzi, Aguilera, Skuhravy, Onorati (Ferroni 58).
Ajax: Menzo - Blind, Alflen, Jonk, De Boer, Winter, Van't Schip (Vink 83), Bergkamp, Pettersson, Kreek, Roy.

● Genoa lost in a thrilling climax and suffered further bad news with a yellow card for two-goal Uruguayan Carlos Aguilera - it was his second of the tournament and he misses the return leg. Genoa did not go into the game in the right spirit: the squad were still upset about what they felt were broken managerial promises over European competition bonuses.

Real Madrid 2 (Gheorghe Hagi 60, Fernando Hierro 65)
Torino 1 (Walter Casagrande 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 93,000. **Ref:** Forstinger (Aus)
Madrid: Buyo - Rocha, Sanchis, Chendo, Lasa, Hierro, Milla (Luis Enrique 88), Michel, Hagi, Butragueno, Llorente.
Torino: Marchegiani - Cravero (Venturin 70), Annoni, Policano*, Bruno, Martin Vazquez, Scifo, Furi, Mussi, Lentini, Casagrande (Benedetti 85).
Policano* sent off, 72min.

● Madrid outplayed Torino but had only a narrow victory to show for it. The former UEFA Cup holders might have scored three times in the first half but wasted their chances. Torino took a surprise lead when Brazilian striker Casagrande took advantage of a miss-field by goalkeeper Paco Buyo. Madrid equalised three minutes later when Romanian Hagi converted a pass from Michel. Hierro scored the winner after Hagi pushed a free-kick so Michel could cross into the penalty box. Torino's Rafael Martin Vazquez, formerly with Madrid, was jeered and booed every time he touched the ball.

CHAMPIONS' CUP
Semi-finals
Group A
(April 15)
Anderlecht 3 (Luis Oliveira 3, John Bosman 44, Marc Degryse 81)
Red Star Belgrade 2 (Darko Pancev 5, Slavisa Cula 80)

Man with a plan . . . Milan president Silvio Berlusconi.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW FROM KEIR RADNEDGE IN MILAN

WAVE THE WORLD CUP GOODBYE

FORGET the World Cup. Never mind the European Championship. Wave goodbye to the European Champions' Cup, the Cup-winners' Cup and the UEFA Cup.

They're passe. History. Yesterday's news.

That, stripped of the sophisticated veneer of conversation, is the opinion of Silvio Berlusconi. And when Berlusconi talks, you listen. After all, being granted a two-hour audience at all is remarkable. Silvio Berlusconi is one busy man.

He is a social and industrial juggler. He has no time for the gauche politics of the hustings and the parliaments. His constituency is the capital market. His political muscle is translated through industry. He owns newspapers, construction companies, insurance houses and television channels. No sector of Italian life is untouched by Berlusconi. Perhaps you read *Il Giornale* each day; watch your local cable TV station for the game shows, movies and sport; live in one of the satellite towns Berlusconi built; insure your family's future through Mediolanum; buy your groceries at the local Standa supermarket.

All this is Berlusconi's empire. So far he could be a business magnate in any one of a dozen countries. But Berlusconi is betrayed — and humanised — by the last piece of his empire: Milan. The world's finest football team; one of the world's most famous clubs. Berlusconi's business interests are intricately woven into one huge, inter-dependent pattern. Berlusconi's empire is its own society.

He juggles each sector against the others. Thus football attracts his employees, gives them pride in association . . . and provides Berlusconi with the very product which will captivate huge audiences for his own television stations.

To Berlusconi the great clubs, such as Milan, Real Madrid and Barcelona represent the future. Television provides the window on the game in which the major consumer commercial interests will want to be reflected. It's a simple equation: Soccer plus television plus big business represents a circle of success.

In the 1990s Berlusconi looks forward confidently to a European league which entertains and reflects "our new communications culture" His vision makes English football's premier prospectors look positively minor league.

Seated behind the great dining table in his palazzo at Arcore, north of Milan, Berlusconi radiates energy. He talks fluently and briskly, preferring Italian for precision. Frequently, forgetting himself in excitement at his own ideas, he breaks into English and overtakes his own in-house translator.

Berlusconi says: "The concept of the national team will, gradually, become

Milan chief sets out his vision of soccer

UEFA Cup
1st leg April 29
2nd leg May 13

TORINO TAKEOVER

Can Ajax stop the Italian surge?

By KEIR **RADNEDGE**

IT COULD have been the most attractive, the most glamourous of the three European finals.

Ajax against Real Madrid would have been been as much about history as about football today.

But, instead of Madrid we have Torino, deserved victors over the Spaniards in the semi-finals — much to the vengeful delight of their inconsistent ex-Madrid midfielder, Rafael Martin Vazquez.

Torino bring their own legend — one which dates much further back than that of Ajax who, in the 1970s, bestrode the European club game like a colossus.

Each set new standards. Torino, in the 1940s, brought an exciting attacking style to an Italian game which was already pursuing the pragmatic; Ajax, in their own way, followed in Torino's studmarks with the "total football" which reached exhibition heights.

Disaster

Torino's reign ended tragically, in the 1949 Superga air disaster which wiped out every professional player in the club which was to celebrate a fifth successive league title; Ajax's reign was ended by CSKA Sofia in the autumn of 1973 but the sale, weeks earlier of Johan Cruyff to Barcelona, had been the beginning of the end.

Valentino Mazzola to Johan Cruyff: Guglielmo Gabetto to Johnny Rep; Ezio Loik to Johan Neeskens; Eusebio Castigliano to Arie Haan.

Memories, memories.

Today's reality will be very different.

There is the Beenhakker factor. Ajax were furious when Real Madrid lured him back to the Spanish capital just before Christmas. Madrid fans are still wondering who got the best of the deal. Madrid have staggered and stumbled ever since Beenhakker's ineptly handled replacement of Raddy Antic . . . and Ajax would have been delighted to take their own revenge. Instead, Torino did the business for them.

But Ajax, having perceptibly improved under Louis Van Gaal, remain spurred onward to show Beenhakker just what he left behind. In merely reaching the final at all, they have demonstrated enormous character after having played the first three rounds without a home match owing to a UEFA disciplinary edict.

On grounds of experience and character, however, Torino might hold an edge over the two legs courtesy of the likes of Roberto Cravero in defence, Martin Vazquez and the exciting Belgian, Enzo Scifo, in midfield plus Brazil's Walter Casagrande in attack.

Also, as Madrid discovered to their cost, Gianluigi Lentini is rapidly emerging as one of the most mistakenly underrated players in all of Europe.

By contrast, Ajax's trump card could be Dennis Bergkamp. The two matches against Torino could turn him overnight (or, over-fortnight) from a boy of potential into a man of substance.

Ajax know they cannot keep Bergkamp for ever, though the player has said he is ready to stay at least another year.

The UEFA Cup Final could settle the issue one way or another.

Torino's Walter Casagrande.

UEFA CUP FINALS (Fairs Cup until 1972)

Year	Opponents	Home	Away	Agg	Att
1955-1958	London XI	2	0	2	45,466
	Barcelona	2	6	8	62,000
1958-1960	Birmingham	0	1	1	40,500
	Barcelona	0	4	4	70,000
1961	Birmingham	2	0	2	21,005
	AS Roma	2	2	4	60,000
1962	**Valencia**	6	1	7	65,000
	Barcelona	2	1	3	60,000
1963	Dynamo Zagreb	1	0	1	40,000
	Valencia	2	2	4	55,000
1964*	**Real Zaragoza**	2			50,000
	Valencia	1			in Barcelona
1965*	Juventus	0			25,000
	Ferencvaros	1			In Turin
1966	Barcelona	0	4¬	4	70,000
	Real Zaragoza	1	2	3	70,000
1967	**Dynamo Zagreb**	2	0	2	40,000
	Leeds United	0	0	0	35,604
1968	**Leeds United**	1	0	1	25,368
	Ferencvaros	0	0	0	76,000
1969	**Newcastle United**	3	3	6	59,234
	Ujpest Dozsa	0	2	2	37,000
1970	Anderlecht	3	0	3	37,000
	Arsenal	1	3	4	51,612
1971	Juventus	2	1	3	65,000
	Leeds United	2	1	3+	42,483
1972	Wolves	1	1	2	45,000
	Tottenham	2	1	3	54,303
1973	**Liverpool**	3	0	3	41,169
	Borussia Mg	0	2	2	35,000
1974	Tottenham	2	0	2	46,281
	Feyenoord	2	2	4	59,317
1975	**Borussia Mg**	0	5	5	42,368
	Twente Enschede	0	1	1	22,767
1976	**Liverpool**	3	1	4	49,981
	Club Brugge	2	1	3	32,000
1977	**Juventus**	1	1	2+	75,000
	Athletic Bilbao	0	2	2	43,000
1978	Bastia	0	0	0	15,000
	PSV Eindhoven	0	3	3	27,000
1979	Red Star Belgrade	1	0	1	87,500
	Borussia Mg	1	1	2	45,000
1980	Borussia Mg	3	0	3	25,000
	Eintracht Frankfurt	2	1	3	60,000
1981	**Ipswich Town**	3	2	5	27,532
	AZ 67 Alkmaar	0	4	4	28,500
1982	**IFK Gothenburg**	1	3	4	42,548
	Hamburg SV	0	0	0	60,000
1983	**Anderlecht**	1	1	2	45,000
	Benfica	0	1	1	80,000
1984	Anderlecht	1	1	2	40,000
	Tottenham	1	1	2Δ	46,258
1985	Videoton	0	1	1	40,000
	Real Madrid	3	0	3	98,300
1986	**Real Madrid**	5	0	5	85,000
	Koln	1	2	3	15,000
1987	**IFK Gothenburg**	1	1	2	50,053
	Dundee United	0	1	1	20,911
1988	Espanol	3	0	3	45,000
	Bayer Leverkusen	0	3	3#	22,000
1989	**Napoli**	2	3	5	83,000
	Vfb Stuttgart	1	3	4	67,000
1990	**Juventus**	3	0	3	60,000
	Fiorentina	1	0	1	41,000
1991	**Internazionale**	2	0	2	75,000
	AS Roma	0	1	1	71,000

Note: first named teams at home in first legs.
Key: * = one match only; + = won on away goals; ¬= after extra time.
Δ = won 4-3 on penalties, after extra time.
= won 3-2 on penalties, after extra time.

HT: 2-1. **Att:** 8,000.
Anderlecht: Maes - Crasson, Kooiman, Rutjes, De Wolf, Walem, Degryse, Oliveira, Lamptey (Verheyen 73), Bosman, Boffin (Van Baekel 64).
Red Star: Jovanovic - Nedeljkovic, Stojkovski, Tanjga, Radinovic, Ratkovic, Ivic, Jugovic, Pancev, Bolic, Mihajlovic (Cula 76).

● Red Star, deposed champions of Europe, soon went behind when Jovanovic failed to hold a Degryse shot and Oliveira followed up. A Peter Maes error at the other end, on a Mihajlovic free-kick, presented Pancev with an equaliser. But just before half-time Bosman headed home a De Wolf cross. Red Star tried hard after the break but did not pull level until substitute Cula scored ten minutes from time. One minute later Degryse regained Anderlecht's lead.

Sampdoria 1 (Roberto Mancini 36)
Panathinaikos 1 (Spiros Marangos 26)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 39,000. **Ref:** Rothlisberger (Swz).
Sampdoria: Pagliuca - Mannini, Katanec, Dario Bonetti, Lanna, Pari, Silas, Invernizzi (Buso 78), Vialli, MAncini, Orlando.
Panathinaikos: Wandzik - Apostolakis, Kalatzis, Christodolu, Kurbanas, Mavridis, Saravakos, Karageorgiu, K Warzycha, Donis, Marangos.

● Marangos provided an early shock for Sampdoria and their fans when he opened the scoring after a corner with Panathinaikos' first goal in the semi-final series. Mancini equalised with an angled drive ten minutes later. Sampdoria badly missed injured Toninho Cerezo and the suspended Lombardo, Vierchowod and Ivano Bonetti but held on to reach their first Champions' Cup Final. Interestingly, the score from Anderlecht v Red Star Belgrade were flashed on the stadium scoreboard.

Final Table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sampdoria	6	3	2	1	10	5	8
Red Star	6	3	0	3	9	10	6
Anderlecht	6	2	2	2	8	9	6
Panathinaikos	6	0	4	2	1	4	4

Group B
(April 15)
Barcelona 2 (Hristo Stoichkov 13, Jose Mari Bakero 23)
Benfica 1 (Cesar Brito 27)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 115,000.
Barcelona: Zubizarreta - Nando, Guardiola, Koeman, Eusebio, Bakero, Goikoetxea, Stoichkov, Laudrup (Alesanco 83), Amor (Nadal 73), Beguiristain.
Benfica: Neno - Jose Carlos (Rui Costa 65), Paulo Madeira, Rui Bento, Veloso, Sousa (Pacheco 79), Vitor Paneira, Schwarz, Isaias, Yuran, Cesar Brito.

● Barcelona reached their third Champions' Cup Final. Benfica, who might have reached the Final themselves had they won in Nou Camp, were quickly left under no illusions about the outcome. Barcelona were hardly impressive as nerves wore them down. But coach Johan Cruyff said: "Reaching the Final was all that mattered." Ronald Koeman's long pass, miscued by defender Jose Carlos, provided Stoichkov with the opening goal. Stoichkov created No 2 for Bakero. Cesar Brito's effort for Benfica was mere Portuguese consolation. Barcelona's Amor collected a second caution and will miss the Final through suspension.

Kiev Dynamo 1 (Oleg Salenko 82)
Sparta Prague 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000.
Kiev: Kutepov - Luzhni, Tsveiba, Anenkov, Sukiasyan (Sharan 46), Kovalets, Yakovenko (Temavski 23), Matveyev, Salenko, Betsa, Gritsina.
Sparta: Kouba - Novotny*, Joksimovic, Vrabec, Hornak, Nemecek, Nemec, Chovanec, Cerny, Siegl, Frydek. Novotny* sent off, 89 min.

● Sparta were surprisingly beaten before a sparse crowd in the Ukraine.

Final Table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	6	4	1	1	10	4	9
Sparta	6	2	2	2	7	7	6
Benfica	6	1	3	2	8	5	5
Kiev Dynamo	6	2	0	4	3	12	4

CUP-WINNERS' CUP
Semi-finals, 2nd legs
(April 15)
Werder Bremen 2 (Marco Bode 31, Manfred Bockenfeld 60)
Club Brugge 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** King (Wal).
Werder Bremen 2-1 on agg
Bremen: Reck - Bratseth, Borowka, Wolter, Bockenfeld (Schaaf 89), Votava, Hermann (K Allofs 70), Bode, Legat, Rufer, Kohn.
Brugge: Verlinden - Querter, Verspaille, Cossey, Borkelmans, Creve (Beyens 46), Staelens, Van der Elst, Disztl (Van der Hayden 70), Booy, Amokachi*. Amokachi* sent off, 75 min.

● Bremen took the lead with a close-range, left-foot shot from Bode. Defender Bockenfeld grabbed the overall winner as he converted a Thomas Wolter pass. Unfortunately Bockenfeld later had to be carried off after colliding with Brugge goalkeeper Verlinden. Bremen goalkeeper Oliver Reck will miss the Final after collecting a second tournament caution.

Feyenoord 2 (Rob Witschge 50, Marian Damaschin 85)
Monaco 2 (George Weah 32, Rui Barros 49)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 38,000.
Monaco on away goals: 3-3 agg
Feyenoord: De Goey - Fraser, Van Gobbel, Metgod, Heus (Damaschin 77), Scholten, Bosz, Rob Witschge, Taument, Kiprich, Blinker.
Monaco: Ettori - Valery, Petit, Mendy, Sonor - Gnako (Thuram 75), Dib, Puel, Weah, Rui Barros, Fofana Passi 69).

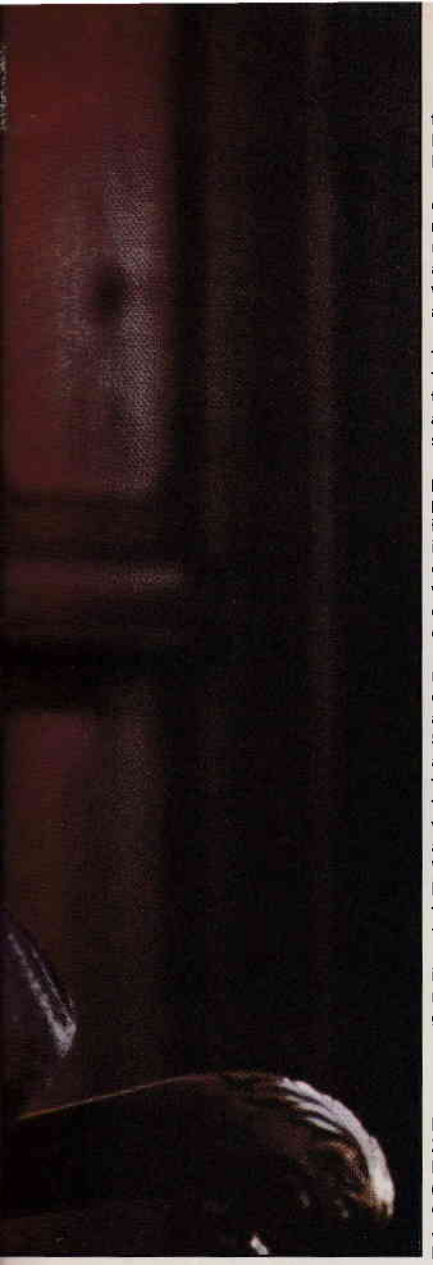
● Monaco, as many Dutch experts had feared, proved too lively a force for Feyenoord to hold. Rui Barros created goal No 1 for Weah, whose run and shot — blocked by De Goey — provided the chance for Rui Barros to head the second. At the other end, when a Kiprich shot was blocked, Witschge pulled one goal back. Then Damaschin equalised in a goalmouth scramble, too little and too late. Monaco's Gnako will probably miss the final after injuring a knee in a tangle with Fraser.

UEFA CUP
Semi-finals, 2nd legs
(April 15)
Ajax 1 (Dennis Bergkamp 47)
Genoa 1 (Maurizio Ionio 39)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 48,500.
Ajax 4-3 on agg
Ajax: Menzo - Blind, Silooy, Jonk, De Boer, Winter (Vink 74), Bergkamp, Kreek, Van't Schip, Pettersson, Roy (Van Loen 78).
Genoa: Braglia - Caricola, Branco, Eranio, Collovati, Signorini, Ruotolo (Onorati 65), Bortolozzi, Ionio, Skuhravy, Ferroni (Fiorin 77).

● Ajax hit back superbly after Genoa had snatched a first-half goal. Skuhravy's pass caught the Ajax defence hesitating, claiming offside. Ionio took no notice as he placed a low cross-shot inside Menzo's right-hand post. Two minutes into the second half Ajax responded. A drive forward by Wim Jonk ended with Bergkamp stabbing home a rebound off goalkeeper Braglia. Later Ajax striker Stefan Pettersson hit the bar.

Torino 2 (Ricardo Rocha og 8, Luca Fusi 76)
Real Madrid 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 61,000.
Torino 3-2 on agg
Torino: Marchegiani - Bruno, Mussi (Sordo 87), Fusi, Annoni, Cravero, Scifo, Lentini, Casagrande (Benedetti 77), Martin Vazquez, Venturin.
Madrid: Buyo - Chendo, Lasa (Luis Enrique 67), Ricardo, Maqueda, Milla, Butragueno, Michel, Hierro, Hagi, Llorente.

● Torino reached a European final for the first time. They were always the sharper to the ball in midfield, where Rafael Martin Vazquez enjoyed taking on his old club. Ricardo, stretching to intercept a cross, volleyed the first goal into his own net. Fusi took advantage of the confusion created in Madrid's defence by Gianluigi Lentini to score the winner.



less and less important. It is the clubs with which the fans associate. A European Championship for clubs is inevitable. The new format for the Champions' Cup is a step in the right direction. But it is only a step.

"The European cups, as they have been organised, have become a historical anachronism. It's economic nonsense that a club such as Milan might be eliminated in the first round. A European cup that lasts the whole season is what Europe wants.

"After all, Europe wanted an economic community, with monetary union and a customs union. It's inevitable it should want a football union, too. And the clubs will lead the way — each playing around 80 games a season."

Wild reports have been emanating from the Stadio Meazza at San Siro that Berlusconi plans to run two teams next season: one in Europe and one in the league. But that is too simplistic an interpretation.

Berlusconi explains his hunger for players thus: "Next season Milan will play twice every week. On Sundays in the Italian League; on Wednesday in the European Cup, or Italian Cup or television friendlies. This is why we must strengthen our squad. The older players cannot expect to be fit enough to play all the time.

"In my six years as president I have never seen our best team play — except in my head. Someone is always injured, or ill, or suspended. So we need many quality players and the players themselves accept this. Because we want to sign more foreigners does not mean, in any way, that we are dissatisfied with any that we have. Quite the reverse. We want Gullit, Van Basten and Rijkaard to stay with us as long as they want — hopefully right through to the end of their careers.

"They have played a very important part in Milan's revival. We respect them as men and we are grateful to them as players."

Involved

Waiting in the wings already, however, are the Croat midfielder, Zvonimir Boban (on loan at Bari), Red Star Belgrade's Dejan Savicevic (who signs after the European Championship) and Marseille's Jean-Pierre Papin (negotiations have reached an advanced stage).

Berlusconi claims to consult his players every step of the way. He says: "At the start we decided the way we wanted to travel. But everybody had to be involved and understand the methods we would use to make the most of the club's potential.

"Managing a football club is not very different from managing any other form of business. You need to choose the right people with the right attitude. I must be doing something right. For example, in my companies we went from zero employees to 36,000 in a comparatively short time. Nobody works FOR Berlusconi; everyone works WITH Berlusconi. It's the same with the football team.

"Marco Van Basten was fully consulted when it came to choosing who plays alongside him in attack next season. I read your reports saying it will be Jean-Pierre Papin from Marseille. Maybe. But, whoever it is, you can be sure that Van Basten will have been a party to the decision."

Berlusconi could not have put it better than to continue: "Milan are my laboratory for the future. We have to reach an audience beyond the stadium. That means television, the theatre of the global village. Milan must be a part of that.

"We would like to be the best, of course. But at the highest level winning or losing is often a matter of luck. What is important is that we are among the main actors in this theatre."

When it comes to the role of football entrepreneur, Berlusconi can point to spectacular success. Six years ago Milan were on the brink of spectacular collapse. The club were £15 million in debt, the previous president had run away to South Africa and the players were shrouded in the fall-out from a match-fixing scandal.

Berlusconi rode in on a red-and-black charger possessed of an imagination to compare with the game's greatest visionaries.

In the 1930s Herbert Chapman believed so passionately in Arsenal's future he persuaded London Transport to change the name of the local Tube station, from Gillespie Road to Arsenal. In the 1940s Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu founded a great stadium and then a great team on a little ground wrecked by the Spanish civil war. In the 1950s Matt Busby defied the English football establishment to take his Busby Babes into the European Cup.

Now Berlusconi believes his media empire has enabled him to define a new audience. He says: "Football is currently ignoring part of its support. First are the fans in the stadium; but that means only 50,000 or 60,000.

"Then there are the fans who watch bits and pieces of soccer on the state channels. But the third audience, which we are not reaching, is to be found on pay-TV. Through cable and satellite we must be able to reach the committed fan who wants to watch our games.

Indulged

"For example, in Lombardy (the region around Milan) that could mean two or three million new viewers. And we believe we are now the best-supported team in all of Italy. The latest figures tell us we have five million fans through the country. They cannot all get into the stadium. But they could watch us through pay-TV."

Over the past three years Milan have indulged in a string of prestige midweek friendlies precisely to feed the high ratings soccer guarantees Canale 5.

Manchester United and Marseille have provided the opposition. And Berlusconi was furious when the French authorities blocked domestic transmission of the match. He says: "They said there was another match that night. That's nonsense. It's like saying TV shows too many news bulletins or too many films."

The key to Berlusconi's vision is his implicit confidence that we can never have too much soccer.

Waiting in the wings . . . Zvonimir Boban (now on loan at Bari), Jean-Pierre Papin of Marseille, and Dejan Savicevic of Red Star Belgrade are likely to add even further to Milan's strength.

The clubs are more important than the countries

Main man . . . Van Basten will lead the Milan attack next season.

PRESS BOX

ALEX MONTGOMERY

THE Sun

***Sun* columnist Alex Montgomery gives a personal view of a controversial FA choice**

A DESPICABLE DECISION

THE FA's decision to allow a Cup semi-final to be played at Hillsborough last month was not merely insensitive but crassly ignorant.

It is a mere three years since 95 men, women and children — all Liverpool supporters — had the life crushed from them on that hellish afternoon of April 15, 1989.

Families still grieve. Some victims are still in coma kept alive only by mechanical aid.

Litigation is still being pursued — yet the FA tell us by their action that time heals and the game must go on.

It is bad behaviour. Inexcusable. Despicable.

There is an argument, put forward by the FA's apologists, for saying that if you are to play any sort of football on the ground, why not an FA Cup semi-final?

But surely the most fitting memorial would have been for Hillsborough never again to be the venue for a match such as this.

Old Trafford and Elland Road are two grounds which could have been made available this year but were not used. Why not? For security reasons? Impossible.

If they cannot pass the test as a safe venue for an FA Cup semi-final they cannot be fit to stage any match.

No. It was bureaucratic arrogance. Part of what Merseyside quite properly considers to be the great Hillsborough whitewash.

The official attitude goes something like — "They are running ferries in and out of Zeebrugge yet more people died there than at Hillsborough" and "They are still playing at Ibrox,

Daffodils for the dead . . . at the Leppings Lane End before the Norwich v Sunderland semi-final.

where 63 died." But there is no comparison between Hillsborough and the two other tragedies.

At Ibrox the fans were not deliberately caged in, they were not directed towards their death, they were not forced back on to the terraces, as I witnessed at Hillsborough, possibly to die in the very crush they had tried to desperately to escape.

To say there were troublemakers in the crowd scrambling to get in after the doors were swung open is a factor.

Protect

But are not the police supposed to protect the innocent from the excesses of the thugs?

If there was a fatal mistake which led to the Herald of Free Enterprise's sinking, then at least it was recognised instantly.

Not so at Hillsborough. I took my seat in the main stand (row 8 seat 89) some 15 minutes before the kick off.

It was obvious, then even that early, to anyone with a shred of knowledge of crowds, and especially those like myself who suffer from claustrophobia, that all was not well.

Within minutes — and long before the police reacted — it was clear there was serious crushing on the Leppings Lane terraces. But nobody did anything until it was too late.

Maybe that is the guilt those of us who knew exactly what was happening, if not the extent, will carry for the rest of our lives.

Maybe we should have run on to the pitch and demanded that the police open the emergency exit gates on the fencing.

If we had done that, many lives would have been saved. But you trust in others, in this case the police.

The FA cannot be blamed for the deaths of the 95, though for many years there has been serious concern about safety at that end of the Hillsborough ground and their continual use of it for semis.

Many fans told me of their experiences when there were terrifying crushes in previous semi-finals, thankfully without the catastrophe of '89.

Even so the FA DID consult the proper authorities: they relied on police advice and police control.

What damns them is the abhorrent decision to endow Hillsborough with another semi-final so soon after the tragedy and what, in effect, amounts to a new health certificate for the ground.

The FA may have felt they had something to prove. The South Yorkshire police certainly did.

They needed to stage a trouble-free semi-final or, in their case, one free from violent death. They achieved that. But at what cost to the FA's credibility?

Ordering Sunderland and Norwich to play the semi-final at Hillsborough (above left) was an exercise designed to confirm that there was nothing wrong with their organisation three years ago, and that only the unforseen and unavoidable contributed to the horrendous number of casualties.

HILLSBOROUGH SHOULD NEVER STAGE ANOTHER BIG GAME

Panic

The images of the dying and the dead are as clear in my mind now as they were when I watched them unfold so horrifically on the day.

Those images still induce moments of panic in me. Even now I cannot bring myself to look at TV recordings of the greatest tragedy to engulf English football.

I cannot forget the old man sobbing as he tried to find his son, then shouting out in rage: "They treat us just like scum, now they are killing us like dogs."

Nobody must forget the tragic fact that so many died or that they died so needlessly.

They had travelled to be part of one of football's great occasions and never returned home. It should not have been like that.

By sanctioning the use of Hillsborough the FA come across as an organisation without a real heart or soul. It shouldn't be like that either.

SACCHI'S ITALY TRIUMPH IN TURIN

BY KEIR RADNEDGE

ITALY and Germany are Europe's international super powers. The evidence: three World Cups apiece.

Now what? Will Germany achieve the first European Championship hat-trick? Will Italy respond as effectively to Arrigo Sacchi as Milan did, particularly now he sees his players on a month-to-month rather than day-to-day basis?.

Clues were on display in Turin when the two met, surprisingly, for the first time since a 1-1 draw in Dusseldorf in the Opening Match of the last European Championship.

Past meetings have provided storybook drama on the pitch. This time, the drama — or farce, more like — came first, the match later.

Back at the start of the season Italy lost 2-1 to Bulgaria in a friendly. Or, not so friendly, since two Bulgarians and Gianluca Vialli were sent off. This, the Italians decided, made Vialli ineligible for the Azzurri's next friendly.

That hardly mattered until after negotiations had been completed to bring Germany to the Stadio Delle Alpi. Federation president Matarrese and manager Sacchi wanted Vialli on the pitch and not in front of his television.

Thus a February friendly was hastily arranged against San Marino so Vialli could be cleared for the "big one."

San Marino were beaten 4-0 and Sacchi duly named Vialli in his squad to assemble at Coverciano outside Florence for ritiro. He would arrive a day late, because of Sampdoria's cup semi-final opener against Parma — but that was all.

In fact, Vialli did not arrive at all. Fouled by a Parma defender in a 1-1 draw, Vialli took a leaf out of the Frank Rijkaard/Spitting Image book of soccer etiquette . . . and was sent off.

Matarrese, furious at such a slight, announced two hours later that he was dropping Vialli from the national squad. Sacchi, supposedly guaranteed "a free hand", was presented with a fait accompli. Whether he had a view or not was immaterial.

Germany had their own local difficulty. By contrast, it was resolved by team chief Berti Vogts rather than a meddling superior.

Given that such matches are for experi-mentation, it was understandable and interesting to see Germany begin with Thomas Doll pulled back in midfield, Karl-Heinz Riedle and Rudi Voller up front and Thomas Hassler apparently playing in what the English call "the hole" i.e. behind the strikers but ahead of the main midfield collective.

Vogts, having tested the theory, would now be wise to dispense with the practice.

Italy provided a curiosity of their own. After decades of man-marking, could Sacchi's players make the practical adjustment to his trademark zone defence.

The signs, early though they may appear, are promising. The absence of specific man-to-man duties provided nominal full-backs Mannini and Carboni with freedom to raid deep into enemy territory. That Italy's "attack" did not force home the advantage was not their fault.

The 11th minute proved the point: Carboni delivered a long cross at the far post, Pierluigi Casiraghi rose above Thomas Helmer and Bodo Illgner leaped to his left to concede a corner.

Germany looked as rustily vulnerable in the first 20 minutes as they had against England at Wembley on their last prestige trip abroad.

Roberto Baggio split open the right flank of their defence and Illgner was all at sea until Buchwald, standing on the goal-line, popped the loose ball forward into his hands.

Sacchi, not a manager given to hype, had claimed before the game not only that Baggio was one of the best forwards in the world but that he had the potential to become The Best.

The Juventus forward, darting nimbly around his home turf, appeared determined to prove he dared attempt that quantum leap and continued to make the German defence look slow both physically and mentally.

Italy, not Germany, looked potential European champions.

But the leopard does not change his spots. After 20 minutes, we saw a touch of the old Calcio.

Matthaus, gazelle-like, danced over a couple of lethal-looking swipes on the edge of the Italian penalty box. Baresi put a stop to that the traditional way, ignoring the ball completely and sending Matthaus tumbling. His cynicism drew an undeserved reward when Matthaus tapped the free-kick square and Brehme's drive was diverted harmlessly for a corner.

Walter Zenga, restored as Italy's No 1 after Gianluca Pagliuca's fumbling form in the league for Sampdoria, had only one other problem in the first half. Even that was not of Germany's making but a head high volleyed backpass from Stefano Eranio.

Otherwise the first half developed into midfield stalemate. Germany tightened

Flying . . . Casiraghi is sent sprawling by Binz as Brehme closes in.

Battling . . . Thomas Helmer and Pierluigi Casiraghi.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

CONTESTANTS

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES:

Anatoli Bishovets took his home-based players to the United States and Central America early this spring, beating the United States and El Salvador before losing the rematch with the Americans 2-1.

He must now reintegrate his foreign-based players and resolve confusion over whether the likes of Protasov, Kanchelskis and Co can play simultaneously for the Ukraine and for the CIS.

ENGLAND:

Manager Graham Taylor's preparatory problems owe everything to the usual logjam of fixtures at the end of the domestic season.

European Championship rivals such as Sweden may think Taylor is experimenting deliberately but he is not: his patched-up team in Czechoslovakia was selected through force of circumstances rather than deliberate policy.

England's four remaining warm-up are against CIS, Hungary, Brazil and Finland.

FRANCE:

Manager Michel Platini will be glad to welcome back fit-again Bruno Martini after the worrying sieve-like performance of his defence in the exciting, but hardly reassuring, 3-3 home draw with Belgium.

HOLLAND:

Everything appears to rest with Milan. Will Ruud Gullit really regain match fitness after his knee operation? Will Frank Rijkaard need an operation on his suspected appendix problem? Injury uncertainty even looms over home-based players, such as PSV Eindhoven's Gerald Vanenburg. He is, at last, back on duty in the league but will he be strong enough to withstand the Brehmes and Buchwalds who lie in wait in Sweden?

SCOTLAND:

Andy Roxburgh's trump card could be Ally McCoist. The Rangers striker is enjoying the form of his life, as his recent league hat-trick against Falkirk proved. Celtic fans wonder whether Paul McStay, at the end of his Parkhead contract, will be on top of

Struggling . . . Matthaus and Binz get to grips with De Napoli and Mannini.

up at the back but their midfield looked lightweight — heavily overdependent on the energies of Matthaus. He can hardly be expected to play five all-action games within a fortnight at the European finals.

Not that Germany were alone in midfield dislocation. Brehme knew Eranio too well to leave him the gaps Liverpool afforded him in the UEFA Cup; and with Eranio (wide right) and Evani (wide left) on duty Roberto Donadoni looked increasingly uneasy in the central midfield.

Germany brought on Jurgen Klinsmann for Rudi Voller at half-time and gave Michael Schulz of Dortmund a first cap in central defence with clubmate Helmer switching to left-back to the exclusion of Brehme. The changes were cosmetic rather than creative.

Waste

Italy put together the best move of the first half in the 55th minute. But a deft rally of passes between Fernando De Napoli and Baggio went to waste as Casiraghi's flying volley skied beyond Illgner's crossbar.

After that . . . nothing. With an hour gone the game was dying on its feet. Thus Sacchi introduced local Torino favourite Lentini, in place of over-the-hill De Napoli, to waken the somnolent 40,000 crowd and his own team.

Germany responded by replacing Doll with Eintracht Frankfurt's Uwe Bein. The first whistles pierced the Alpine chill with a quarter of an hour to go after Evani sent Lentini into acres of space down on the left only for the substitute to cross the ball behind both Casiraghi and Baggio.

Finally, after 83 minutes' shadow-boxing, the game burst into life as Germany wasted a golden opportunity. Bein sent Hassler around Mannini, his cross was feebly headed away by Carboni and Stefan Reuter's low drive forced a diving catch from Zenga.

Italy, in classic Sacchi fashion, pressed forward.

Lentini robbed Reuter in midfield, exchanged passes with Baggio, charged into the penalty box and fell over the statuesque Buchwald.

Technically, the offence was obstruction, for which due punishment is an indirect free-kick. Morally, it was a penalty and that, to the Germans' anger, is what referee Larsson awarded.

Illgner, as he stood on his goal-line, may have recalled the last penalty he faced beneath this same crossbar.

But his one-on-one rival this time was not a weary Chris Waddle but Baggio, on home territory.

This penalty found the net and Italy had beaten Germany for the first time since the 1982 World Cup Final.

Sacchi almost smiled in satisfaction. Yes, this was progress.

Yes, the insertion of Lentini had been deliberately made to shake up the game. Yes, the new players were learning their lessons.

Vogts was deadpan grumpy. Yes, a lot of work was needed.

Yes, France and the other European finalists would be smiling. Yes, the players had paid the price of complacency.

On a critical level, one could pick holes-a-plenty in both teams.

But even high-prestige friendlies such as this are now trials for the big events ahead.

Germany WILL present a very different face in Sweden; history tells us that.

History also underpins a long-term lesson from Turin, that Sacchi's Italy WILL be a force in the next World Cup.

his form to supply the bullets for McCoist (right) to fire.

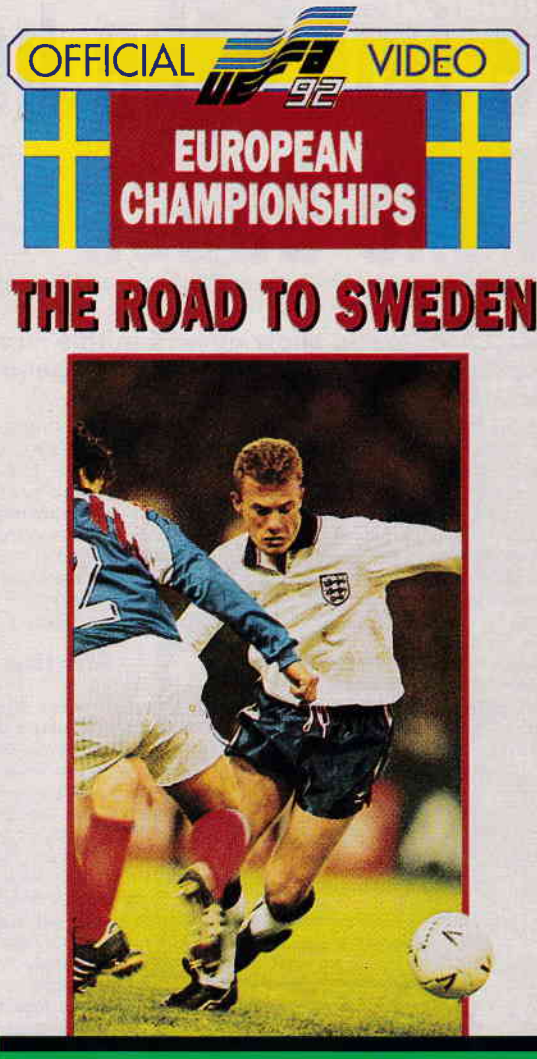
SWEDEN:

Manager Tommy Svensson took his home-based players to Australia early this spring, without any success. He must build again from scratch as and when the foreign-based players are available. Sweden, more than anyone, could be praying for a miracle on the eve of the tournament.

YUGOSLAVIA:

It's an ill wind which blows no-one any good. At the draw for the finals Slav manager Ivica Osim complained that he could not prepare properly because Red Star would be tied up until the end of the season in their Champions' Cup defence. Red Star's effective semi-final elimination at the hands of Sampdoria may not have upset Osim as much as it did Pancev and Co.

50 GREAT VIDEOS TO BE WON!



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Question

Four of the nations taking part in this year's European Championship finals have been past winners of the trophy . . . can you name them?

spotlight on

DENNIS BERGKAMP

BY SIMON **KUPER**

He joins the best of the bunch

IF HOLLAND are to show up well in this summer's European Championship, much will depend on Dennis Bergkamp of Ajax.

He is one of his country's few players of genuine world class now that such as Gullitt, Rijkaard and Van Basten are on the downhill slope.

His election as Players' Player of the Year was no surprise, and he looks set for many seasons in the national side. But which club will he be representing?

Although he has promised to stay in Holland for another year after this season, he seems bound to go south eventually. After all, Juventus were his favourite club when he was a child . . . and he has been learning Italian for the past three years.

Some say Bergkamp is proof that Johan Cruyff is always right. Five years ago, when Cruyff managed Ajax, he picked the skinny, unremarkable 17-year-old Bergkamp as his outside-right.

Scoring

Ajax traditionally blood players young, but Bergkamp was never a star as a child and often played for Ajax's second-choice youth teams.

At only 18, he appeared in the 1987 Cup-winners' Cup Final, when Ajax beat Lokomotive Leipzig, yet when Cruyff left, Bergkamp took time to gain a regular place in the Ajax side.

Occasionally he came good, and set a Dutch record by scoring in ten successive matches, but too often he failed. Critics said that Cruyff had seen a talent that did not exist.

Only last season, under Leo Beenhakker, did Bergkamp become undroppable. He made his debut for Holland after the Italian World Cup and scored five goals in his first ten internationals. Last year he was joint highest scorer in the Dutch League with 25 goals.

Bergkamp turned down Real Madrid last season, saying that he felt too young to live alone in a foreign city. To general surprise, this year he again told Real to wait.

Ajax manager Louis van Gaal said: "When I asked him if he was relieved, he answered, 'Yes, very.' So his decision was the right one."

He feels he needs Amsterdam and his family, and still lacks confidence in his ability to succeed in Spain. Typically, the more arrogant Van Basten joined AC Milan at 22, the age Bergkamp is now.

Bergkamp's shyness means that he feels ill at ease when playing for Holland among established stars. He says that if Ajax win the UEFA Cup this season it would mean more to him than if Holland win the European Championship.

"If we win the UEFA Cup, I'll have had a large share in that. But at the European Championship there will be other players who are more important."

His comments show that in the Dutch team a social gulf still exists between the four or five stars and the rest. This gulf was one reason why Holland failed at the last World Cup.

Similar

Colleagues agree that Bergkamp, though a similar player to Van Basten, lacks his personality. Peter Bosz, the Feyenoord midfielder who has twice played for Holland, says: "In the Dutch squad Dennis was very quiet. At his age Van Basten was already talking constantly and in that way was a step ahead. Cruyff was also telling people what to do when he was 17.

"Dennis hasn't got that, and I don't know if he'll ever develop that.

"But he's amazingly fast, and unlike most fast players he's very skilful. Apart from that he can lose his marker at exactly the right moment with several good feints.

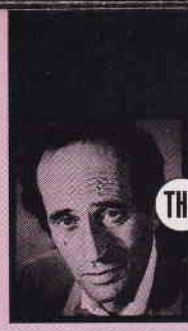
"To call him unique might be putting it too strongly, but certainly he is a rarity."

Mitchel van der Gaag of Sparta Rotterdam says: "Some strikers are fast and some can head but Bergkamp is an all-rounder. He's strong on the ball, he can beat a man, he can score, he's quite good at heading. You never know what he'll do."

Status

Exciting times lie ahead for Bergkamp. He will be 23 at the European Championship, the same age as Van Basten was in 1988. As the older generation retire over the next two or three years, Bergkamp is one of the very few guarantees that Holland will retain some footballing status no matter what country is then his home.

To call him unique might be putting it too strongly, but certainly he is a rarity.



THE Brian Glanville COLUMN

MAKING A MESS OF THE RULE BOOK

AS WE all know, the FIFA committee examining the laws of the game parturated the inevitable mouse.

None of the suggestions they have made, and none made by the likes of Pele, forever yearning for publicity, alas, seems likely to make football any better; though at least we have no more of that rubbish about widening the goals or cutting teams down to ten.

Like Keir Radnedge, I have already waxed wrath on the subject of the proposed change obliging keepers to play deliberate passes back with thier feet.

A Swedish member of the FIFA panel estimates that 30 per cent of time was saved by this rule in last summer's world youth tournament in Tuscany. I can only repeat that the mindless pass back contains the seeds of its own punishment; as clearly evidenced by a rash of recent disasters for them as uses it.

Wretched

At Bramall Lane, I saw the wretched Rogers, make a ludicrous attempt at a pass back to his excellent keeper, Simon Tracey. Brian McClair, lurking with intent in an offside position, was put onside, and scored.

In London, meanwhile, Gary Mabbutt, the Tottenham skipper and England international centre-half, sealed defeat by Sheffield Wednesday when he feebly passed back to his keeper, Erik Thorstvedt. The ball never got there; it ended in Tottenham's net, and Wednesday won, 2-0.

The following day, a similar error in Turin cost Juventus a goal, though they were 3-0 ahead at the time, so it was not of much purport.

Making all free-kicks direct? This has something to recommend it.

I seem to remember that those awarded for obstruction were indeed direct until 1951, and since obstruction has always appeared to me just as serious a foul as a trip or a tug of the shirt, I've never really understood why it should not be punished accordingly.

Sometimes, too, it's hard for a referee to differentiate. If it means more penalties, then so be it.

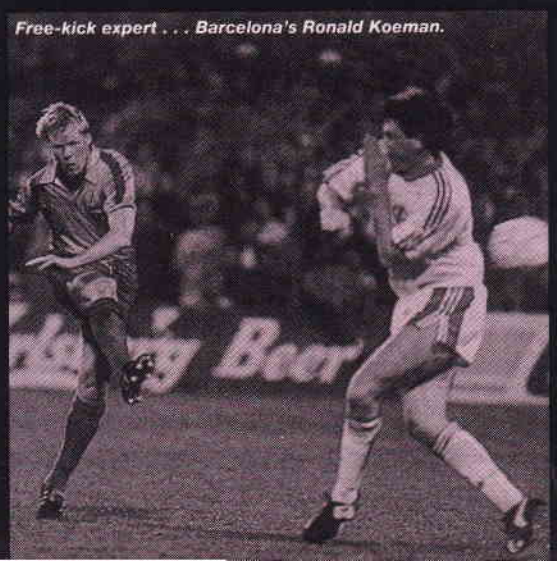
Abolishing the wall at a free-kick, by contrast, has nothing to recommend it. The Darwinian response — at least in Europe and South America — has been the evolution of a breed of players who can superbly bend and swerve their kicks.

Free-kick expert . . . Genoa's Branco.

Of late, I remember a massive right-footed thump whereby Ronald Koeman scored against Real Madrid for Barcelona, a blazing long left-footed drive by Branco, the Brazilian international left-back, which fairly seared into the Liverpool net in Genoa, a wallop by his club-mate, Mario Bortolazzi, which ripped by Pagliuca in the Genoese derby, a beautifully struck left-footed curler whereby Chovanec of Sparta scored against Benfica in Prague. Kick-ins for throw-ins have always been a non-starter so far as I am concerned. What is the point — again there is an analogy with free-kick specialists — when so many players are now quite capable of hurling the ball into the goalmouth?

"Sin bins" for players guilty of offences not quite meriting sending off could be a mixed blessing. As Sir Stanley Rous observed, in his FIFA presidential days, what would become of a player temporarily expelled on a biting cold day on Hackney Marshes?

To appoint a special timekeeper might be two-edged, as well. We all know that a 90-minute game never in fact lasts 90 minutes. A stop-start sport — if you can call it that — like American gridiron football clearly needs such an official for time — forever stopping — is of the essence.



Free-kick expert . . . Barcelona's Ronald Koeman.

In football, were the clock stopped every time the ball was out of play, rather than when the referee blew to allow a player to be treated, or deemed that time was truly being wasted, matches could last to eternity. Heaven knows they tend to go on long enough as it is.

If you were to appoint a timekeeper, he would have to be given very specific instructions as to what did and did not constitute a legitimate stoppage.

Whistle

True, referees tend to be a little capricious in deciding such matters, so that some — stand up M. Vautrot in the last World Cup — prolong a game to screaming point, and others seem to take no account of time lost. A variation which becomes especially germane when a goal is ruled out on the whistle, just as the ball is flying into the net.

Controversy is inevitable.

One rule I would like to see overhauled is that of the "professional foul." As I have written before, it was absolutely typical of Joao (Water Polo) Havelange that, having stamped on the law when our League introduced it nearly a decade ago, he should finally bring it back in such a bastardised form.

In the first place, the whole ethos behind the categorisation of a professional foul was that of seeing that transgressors did not escape the consequences of their actions.

Fell a man in the box, and a penalty would, or should, be given. Handle the ball and the same fate will or should properly befall you.

Strictly speaking, the League were out of order when they unilaterally introduced the new rule. But it was plainly a fine innovation.

No longer could a player cynically chop down an opponent mere feet or inches from the penalty box and escape with a free-kick which, in those days at least, seldom seemed to bring anything of value.

Heavylunge, as that English journalist so neatly nicknamed him in the 86 World Cup, lunged heavily and killed the law dead. Only and belatedly to bring it back, with application in the penalty area, too.

Surely, one felt, condign punishment was visited on an

offender who gave away a penalty and what should certainly, were the kicker a proper professional, be a goal? No, decreed FIFA. Such sinners must also be banished. Thereby, surely defeating the whole original object of the exercise.

So this season, just like last, you tend to have referees turning themselves into charitable institutions.

A defender concedes a penalty in the box? Maybe the attacker wouldn't have scored, so the defender can stay on.

Goalkeepers seem particular beneficiaries of such charity, especially when they handle outside the box. Managers then talk about a referee's fine sense of proportion.

On the day of which I wrote, Peter Schmeichel, the Manchester United goalkeeper, felt he *should* have been sent off, when, outside the box, he handled a shot by Brian Deane of Sheffield United. He was not even booked.

The referee was understood to have said, in private, that Schmeichel obtained the benefit of the doubt because there were defenders still between Deane and the United goal.

But the yellow card was surely mandatory, at the least.

CHIPS WITH TOSH

ON the subject of free-kicks in Italy, an Englishman may still be remembered for one of the fiercest of them.

Stand up the inimitable "Tosh" Chamberlain (above), so long beloved and belaboured by the crowd at Fulham, when partner to Johnny Haynes.

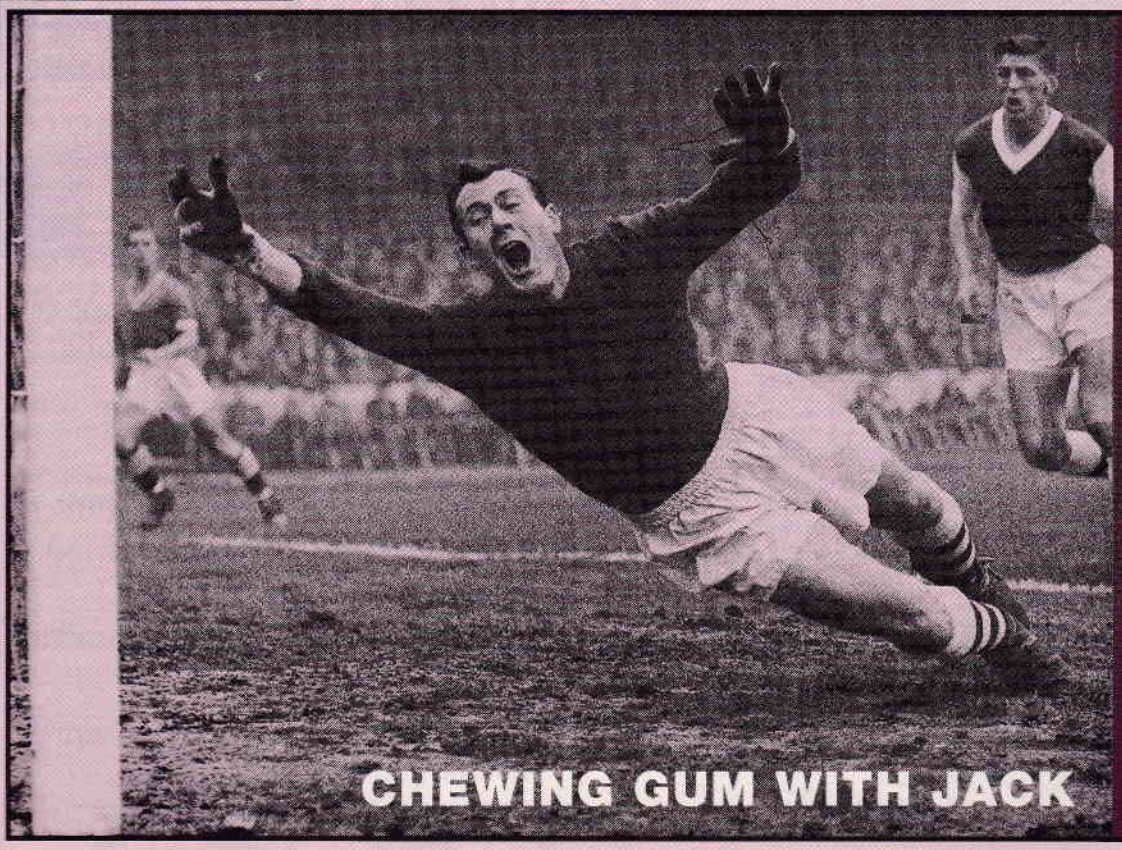
Tosh, otherwise Trevor, whose genial presence can still be found down by the river — and long may Fulham stay there — was sometimes erratic, but oh, did he have a left foot! The story goes that Fulham were playing Sampdoria on a summer tour. They were awarded a free-kick on the edge of the box. Johnny Haynes, inside-left and England captain, also England's first £100-a-week footballer, told Chamberlain: "Chip it, Tosh."

Chamberlain ran up to the ball, and let fly a mighty left-foot shot that flew past the astonished goalkeeper.

"If the net hadn't been there," a Fulham player told me, "it would have finished in the Mediterranean."

Trotting back to the centre circle, Haynes said: "I thought I told you to chip it, Tosh."

"I did," said Chamberlain.



CHEWING GUM WITH JACK

HOW deeply sad that poor Jack Kelsey (left) of Arsenal should die such an early, wretched death. Years ago, I had the good fortune to work with him on his autobiography and how enjoyable it was. The period coincided with his marvellous display in goal for Wales against Brazil in Gothenburg in the 1958 World Cup finals.

"Chewing gum!" he said. "Always put some on my hands. Rub it well in."

BY DAVID **WALKER**

FRANCE? NEVER AGAIN

JOHN BYRNE of Sunderland is lining up an FA Cup Final appearance, while Eric Cantona of Leeds United looks like missing a League Championship medal in his first season.

But both strikers have something in common: They will not play in France again.

Republic of Ireland forward Byrne's French connection was unhappy, and the controversial Cantona much prefers the English game to soccer in his homeland.

Byrne, 30, shot Sunderland to an FA Cup final appearance at Wembley less than two years after being on the brink of prematurely quitting the game in disgust.

A dream move from Queen's Park Rangers to start a new life at Le Havre ended in bitter acrimony with him claiming to be thousands of pounds out of pocket and disillusioned by his chosen profession. "I was so miserable in France I almost packed in", he said. "It was horrible.

"At the time I felt like packing in everything. In France they hunted me down and tried to drive me out, all because I said I wanted to return home to England.

"In the end they owed me thousands in wages and said I couldn't have a penny. They even tried to get me out of my apartment and they stuck me to play with the youth team twice a week. They didn't want to know me." So Byrne wrote to every club in the English First and Second Division, asking them to end his misery . . . and received only two replies, from Blackburn and Brighton.

"I had two good years on the field with Le Havre, and then I went with the Republic of Ireland to the 1990 World Cup finals and Sunderland tried to buy me," he recalled.

"At first Le Havre wanted £400,000. They dropped it to £300,000 and eventually it was £125,000. If I had stayed a bit longer they might have been giving me a free!

"They knew I was homesick but their response was to freeze me out.

"Eventually I contacted Barry Lloyd, the Brighton manager, and it proved a good move for me to go there. Then Sunderland came in again for me this season and I finally moved to Roker Park.

"Ironically, Sunderland had tried to sign me three times in my career — twice while I was in France. Now everything is unbelievable."

Denis Smith, the manager who nurtured Byrne's formative skill at York, eventually wooed him to Wearside. But Smith's dismissal prevented him from witnessing the Byrne-inspired revival.

Byrne, a Mancunian whose Irish parentage qualifies him to play for the Republic of Ireland, said "I feel I'm making a very sweet response to some people in France.

"Football is sweet for me again."

It certainly is — he has scored in every round of the FA Cup this season!

Beautiful

Cantona also has no intention of playing in France again, and says that politicians and people like his former boss, Marseille president Bernard Tapie, made him despair for his country.

"I don't vote — these sort of people make me hate a country which deserves to be adored. In England everything is beautiful," he says.

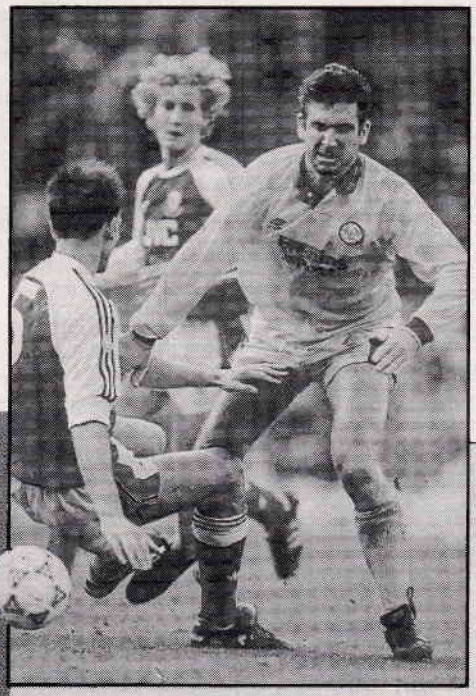
"The stadiums are fine, the atmosphere is great — cops on horseback, the crowds, the respect and communion between the players and fans, the absence of jealousy.

"The game is spectacular, too. There is no malice. It's honest."

Leeds are negotiating the permanent signing of Cantona, 25, who has scored 12 goals in 22 games for France.

He is a moody, brooding character who finds solace in painting woodland scenes, and had frequent clashes with authority during his time in France, but his sights are still set on the 1994 World Cup.

BYRNE AND CANTONA WON'T GO BACK



On the road to Wembley . . . Byrne is mobbed by fans after scoring Sunderland's semi-final winner (above left).

On the road to Leeds. . . Cantona en route to Elland Road, and playing against Arsenal (above).

N. America

by PAUL GARDNER

Indoor venue . . . the Pontiac Silverdome in Detroit, the World Cup's first covered stadium.

EASTERN PROMISE

But Las Vegas may stage the draw for '94

ONE of the first moves made by Alan Rothenberg after his 1990 election as president of the United States Soccer Federation was to move World Cup 94's HQ from Washington DC to the West Coast.

To Los Angeles — which happens to be where Rothenberg has his home.

And where Chuck Cale, appointed by Rothenberg as the World Cup supremo, also lived.

The move was severely questioned at the time — not least because the nine-hour time difference would make communications with Europe difficult.

The flight to California does not look any better now than it did then.

Cale has since been fired, and now the selection of the nine venues makes it clear that World Cup '94 will be staged primarily in the Eastern half of the United States.

Capital

Only two of the chosen sites are on the West Coast: the Los Angeles Rose Bowl, and Stanford Stadium. Dallas could be termed central, while the other six venues — Detroit, Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington and Orlando are very much eastern cities.

But stand by . . . for an early blast of the sort of neon craziness that California is famous for. It won't come from California, but from its neighbour state, Nevada. Plans are already being drawn up to hold the December 1993 World Cup draw in the capital of glitz and garishness: Las Vegas.

This is very much FIFA's idea, says Steve Sampson, one of World Cup '94's vice-presidents. "The final draw is FIFA's event, they will make the decisions as to where it is held. We have applications from Phoenix, Orlando and Las Vegas."

The links that Las Vegas has with gambling, not to mention vice and the mob, seem not to worry FIFA.

Indeed, casino technology may be used during the draw. "There has been talk of changing the traditional method of doing the draw, with balls drawn out of pots," says Sampson, "something more modern is being sought, with a more Las Vegas flavour.

"I think FIFA want to do something different, something more creative."

Not that the American organisers are averse to the idea of Las Vegas. Far from it.

The rather second-rate entertainment that was put on in New York last December during the qualifying-round draw has evidently left its mark.

Says Sampson: "One of the strong points of Las Vegas would be the availability of top-class entertainers, and the ability to put on a great show."

If Las Vegas does get the draw, it will be an isolated event, for no World Cup games will be played there. That presents another problem, for Germany have agreed to send the national team to play the US at the time of the draw . . . and Las Vegas doesn't have a suitable stadium.

That hitch leaves the door open for Orlando to stake its claim. For Orlando does have a large stadium, and it is one of the World Cup playing sites.

And while it can't compete with Vegas in noisy, non-stop night life, it does have Disney World, which would act as the host/organiser for the event.

The opening ceremony traditionally precedes the opening game. But things may not work that way in the US, where serious consideration is being given to the idea of making the opening ceremony a separate event.

"No decision has been made — that's FIFA's move," says Sampson, "but we would like to have it separate — maybe even at a non-selected city.

Commitment

"That would be in line with our commitment to spread the interest in the World Cup as wide as possible."

No doubt the inspiration is the Olympic Games, with its huge parade of participating athletes and flags.

But as it would not be practical for the World Cup teams to join in a parade, and as there would be no game, and as fans would no doubt be asked to pay through the nose for the privilege of seeing neither — who would want to turn up?

"This would be a true extravaganza," says Sampson, "a show to welcome the world to the American World Cup. I'm confident there would be a high demand for tickets.

"If we do stage the opening ceremony separately, we would also put on a smaller ceremony to precede the opening game."

What this probably means is a deafening, rip-roaring rock show with all sorts of top names — something that can be sold to kids. It does not sound like a soccer event.

Where? Lips are sealed. But a couple of reasonable assumptions can be made. It will be near wherever FIFA decide to make their headquarters.

And FIFA has been so insistent, for so long, that New York City be one of the venues . . .

World Cup sponsorship news has been looking up a bit — with the signing of McDonalds and the imminent arrival of General Motors.

This is good news for Detroit, for although the Silverdome has officially been announced as a venue, without the active participation of GM there was some doubt about its viability.

The fascination with the Silverdome as the first indoor stadium in World Cup history has obscured one of its problems, one that it shares with New York's Giants Stadium. The playing area is not wide enough.

Roger Faulkner, who leads the Detroit bid, says: "We can get 70 yards, and still have room for the advertising boards down the sidelines, and not have problems with sightlines.

"To get a width of 75 yards, we would have to build a platform, costing about $250,000. We also have a half-way stage — we can get 72 yards without building the platform, but by removing a few rows of seats.

"Our capacity is 80,000, but the platform would reduce that to 75,000."

In past World Cups, all pitches have had the same measurements: 75 yards wide by 115 yards long (68m x 105m).

These are much more stringent requirements than for regular international games, for which pitches can be 70 x 80 yards (64-75m) wide, and 110 x 120 yards (100-110m) long.

FIFA seem likely to allow the more lenient standards at World Cup '94.

Outdoor fantasy . . . Disney World in Orlando could stage the World Cup draw.

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spotlight on

Paulo *Futre*

MANZANARES MAESTRO

PAULO FUTRE, captain of Cup-winners' Cup failures Atletico Madrid, is something of a George Best figure.

Not that he is likely to quit his football club for clubs of a different nature — Futre enjoys driving fast cars too much to take that sort of chance.

But, like Best, he is a marvellously gifted forward whose international status has been restricted by an accident of birth. Just as Best, the hero of Old Trafford, never had the opportunity to star at World Cup level for Northern Ireland, so Futre, the hero of Manzanares, has missed out through being Portuguese.

His initial successes with Sporting Lisbon and FC Porto put him on the talent map of Europe, and Atletico Madrid have looked to him for inspiration for the past five years. But Futre yearns for the grand stage, and Portugal's modest standing among Europe's national teams has denied him.

Paulo Jorge dos Santos Futre was born on February 28, 1966, and as early as his mid-teens was rated the finest prospect thrown up by the Portuguese game since Benfica's luckless, injury-prone Fernando Chalana in the 1970s.

Indeed, as Futre progressed, his talents provoked virtual civil war among the national team managers in 1983-84, because they could not decide whether he should play for the senior or youth team.

Futre joined Sporting Lisbon at 12 and made his first-team debut on a tour of Brazil in May 1983. Four months later he made his full international debut in a 5-0 win over Finland.

PAULO'S STILL THE DRIVING FORCE

He was then 17 years six months 21 days, Portugal's youngest-ever international and one of the youngest anywhere in Europe. Sporting's fans envisaged years of entertainment and success, because of his brilliance.

They had a rude awakening. In the summer of 1984 Futre suddenly walked out on Sporting to join northern rivals FC Porto — lured away as revenge for the way in which Sporting had enticed Porto's international midfielders, Pacheco and Sousa. In today's terms, it would be a little like Liverpool suddenly announcing they had signed Manchester United's Ryan Giggs.

Collapsed

Porto had no illusions about Futre. They knew he would not stay long, that once his talent had been proved at European club level he would be tempted by the money thrown in his direction from Spain and Italy.

Indeed, Futre almost joined Atletico Madrid in 1985 after he had been at Porto only one season. The deal collapsed simply because, at the last moment, hard-up Atletico could not agree payment terms.

So Futre stayed with Porto for the two most important seasons in the club's history.

In 1985-86 they won the League title, beating Benfica to the post by two points, and earned entry into the Champions' Cup. Porto then had the luck of the draw. Malta's Rabat Ajax were easy victims in the first round; Vitkovice of Czechoslovakia were international new boys, lacking the necessary experience, in the second round; Brondby were rusty after the Danish winter break when Porto beat them in the quarter-finals.

Futre . . . leading from the front.

Still more luck went Porto's way when the favourites, Bayern Munich and Real Madrid, were drawn together in the semi-finals. Porto's opposition came from the less substantial challenge of Kiev Dynamo. Futre scored the opening goal in the first leg in the Stadio das Antas, and his club squeezed through to the final in Vienna.

Bayern Munich were their opponents, and clear favourites. Porto had been badly hit by injury, but with Futre a powerful lone front-runner, they pulled holes in the German defence, hitting back from one down to win 2-1. This was the first Portuguese success in the Champions' Cup since Benfica in 1962, and it made Futre an instant transfer target.

Contacted

Atletico came back into the frame. Presidential candidate Jesus Gil agreed terms: if he won Atletico's elections he would buy Futre for £2 million. When Gil also contacted Argentine coach Cesar Luis Menotti, the Atletico fans gave him their votes in a landslide.

Futre nearly got cold feet. But Gil knew his man. The promise of a new yellow Porsche did the trick . . . and Futre has starred at the Manzanares ever since.

He has been the one fixed personality in an uncertain world where a dozen coaches have come and gone in five years.

He is captain and superstar. Occasionally he admits that he would not object to a move to Barcelona or Real Madrid or to Italy, but he knows he is cock of the walk at Atletico. If he signs the new contract on offer Gil will furnish him with a garage-full of fast cars.

What more could he want?

RINO LANDA

letters

We welcome your letters on any topic concerning international football. Write to: Editor's Letters, World Soccer, 25th Floor, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. We regret that Information Desk queries (no long lists please) can be dealt with only through this column.

Euro travesty

SIR — I read that Dr Silvio Berlusconi is once again pressing for a Euro-league, this time calling the existing cups "an anachronism". How right he is. It is a travesty that clubs like Milan and Juventus, possibly the best club sides in the world, can spend a whole year out of Europe.

Europe is a sad place in footballing terms when starved of players like Gullit, Van Basten, Baggio et al. And what of teams like Manchester United and PSV Eindhoven who were knocked out early on? Their loss is ours as well.

The Champions' Cup system is a half-baked compromise: a boring fusion of the worst of league and cup. In an age where strides are being made towards a European superpower in political and economic terms, why not extend it to sport?

The logistics cannot be any more difficult than organising a World Cup, and the money generated would grow enormously, and (eventually) find its way down through all levels of our game. The sport would be in fit shape to face the next century.

As for travel problems, Milan, Munich, Marseille and Madrid aren't really all that far apart, are they?

— MICHAEL GALVAN, Canterbury, Kent.

Baggio . . . missing.

African dream

SIR — I was surprised to hear that South Africa had not yet been admitted to FIFA. I find this interesting because nearly all other sports have been admitted to world competition.

Having lived in South Africa I know that soccer was the first sport to be fully integrated and run on non-racial lines. I understand that in recent years there have been many problems with South African soccer, such as different factions vying for control.

I find it very surprising that FIFA are moving so slowly with regard to South African soccer whereas most other sports teams are already displaying their talents on the world stage (many of these sports have only recently become non-racial).

In a country as complex and volatile as South Africa believe that FIFA can play an important part by helping soccer solve the many problems, partly caused by years of isolation, with the prospect of international competition.

The dream of playing for one's country can give hope and dignity to many a poor black youngster living in poverty. Soccer has an important part to play in promoting social stability in the new South Africa.

— C G LOCK, Gisborne, New Zealand.

Wanted: a neutral stadium

SIR — UEFA should build a stadium of their own to host the European finals. The stadium would always be available, totally neutral, and so stop the recurrence of a team playing a final in their home stadium, as happened in 1984 when Roma played Liverpool.

This stadium would also incorporate all the modern safety aspects, as recommended by the Taylor Report and stop the finals from ever being played in rickety old stadiums, thus never having a repeat of Heysel 1985. It would also stop UEFA wasting time by sending safety experts to inspect potential final-hosting stadia.

And who knows, the new stadium may even gain the same prestige as Wembley has in England.

— TOM CAREY, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

Penpals

ATALANTA and Fiorentina fan, male, 17, wants penfriends m/f especially in Italy and England. Write in English.
— Ahmed Mohmed, Box 8941, 22060 Kuwait.

I'M 16 and seeking penpals around the world. I like Roma and Juventus, Giannini and Casiraghi.
— Caroline Aw, Susilo Raya 10, Jakarta 11450, Indonesia.

THREE brothers seek contact with other football fans, anywhere in the world.
— Zahariah, Bussaggege and Adamu Osumanu, Billiton Bogoso Gold Ltd., PO Box 11, Bogoso, Ghana.

FEMALE, 16, fan of Inter and Juventus, seeks penfriends worldwide. Please write in English.
— Yuko Kaitani, 405 9-12, Honcho Zchome, Kokubunji-shi, Tokyo 185, Japan.

ENGLAND and Arsenal fan, 17, male, wants to contact female Arsenal supporters near London or in Ireland. Send photo if poss.
— Raisham Jeawon, 29 Georgian Village, Castleknock, Dublin 15, Ireland.

JAPANESE girl, crazy about AC Milan, wants penpals worldwide.
— Kanami Shinohara, 3-9-19-108 Satonaka-cho, Nishinomaya City, Hyogo, Japan.

I AM a Manchester United fan and would like to correspond with other football followers throughout the world.
— Ronnie Govender, 7 Cardew Crescent, Parlock, Durban 4051, South Africa.

SOCCER fans in Sweden and Denmark wanted to correspond.
— Alan Whitham, 4 Carleton Road, Colne, Lancashire BB8 8JP, England.

FOOTBALL MAD fan of Aston Villa, Leeds, Notts Co. and Portsmouth seeks penfriends with similar tastes
— Ian Lipthorpe, 5 Stafford Road, Guisborough, Cleveland, England, TS14 70W.

TWO Tanzanian soccer fans, both 20, looking for penpals.
— Mtindo Manyanda, c/o Ndolla, PO Box 20166, Dar-es-Salaam; and Moses Munisi, Mzizima Ltd., PO Box 25189.

ARSENAL fan, 15, seeks worldwide penpals. All letters answered.
— Shay Guiney, Gurrane, Castle Cor, Mallow, Co. Cork, Ireland.

CHINESE fan, passionate about AC Milan, Liverpool and Forest, seeks penpals. All letters answered.
— Hu Jian Ming, No. 6 Middle School, Wuxi, Jiangsu Prov. 214073, China.

Exchanges

INDONESIAN souvenirs in exchange for Roma's jacket, scarves, shirt etc.
— Caroline Aw, Susilo Raya 10, Jakarta 11450, Indonesia.

BRAZILIAN collector interested in exchanging information about national teams of all countries.
— Clovis Martins da Silva Filho, Caixa Postal 15502, CEP 201132, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

FOOTBALL material for exchange, especially with English fans.
— Boris Ocheretner, 143-2- Vologradskiy Prospekt, Moscow 109443.

BARCELONA and AC Milan fan wants to contact others in England and Italy, to exchange pennants etc.
— Alfredo Martin, Juan Padron 25, 38300 La Oratava, Tenerife, Spain.

BADGES, pennants, shirts etc. for exchange. All letters answered.
— Boris Mironov, Ulitsa Sudakova 15-38, 109382 Moscow.

COLLECTOR will exchange all sorts of soccer souvenirs. All letters answered.
— Jose Guillermo Torres Perez, Sta. Catarina 6241, Centre Rayon y Santiago, Col. Topchico, CP 64260, Monterrey NL, Mexico.

SCARVES, badges, photos etc. for exchange with English soccer fans.
— George Transioveanu, Str. Lon Sula No. 30, Pepesti-Leordeni, Sect. 4, Bucharest 75133, Romania.

ALL letters answered by collector keen to exchange badges, pennants, programmes, etc.
— Victor Shumilo, Len St. 1/1 39, 453201 Salavat, Poccui, USSR.

PROGRAMMES and other souvenirs wanted in exchange.
— Pavel Movchan, 121 Lenina St. Rakitno, Kiev OBL 256710, Ukraine.

STADIUM postcards wanted worldwide. Write in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese.
— Enzo Sansone, Via Appiani 18, 20052 Cinisello B., Milan, Italy.

COLLECTOR will exchange all types of soccer souvenirs with others.
— Vladimir Vinogradov, 46-1-12 Michalkovskaya, 125438 Moscow.

STICKERS, shirts, shellsuits etc. wanted for exchange.
— Gary Milne, 2 Ardeer Place, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, Scotland AB43, 5SW.

Wanted

JUVENTUS badges and other souvenirs.
— Yu Kit Fungi, 2003 Wing Wai Hse. Sun Tin Wai Est., Shatin, Hong Kong.

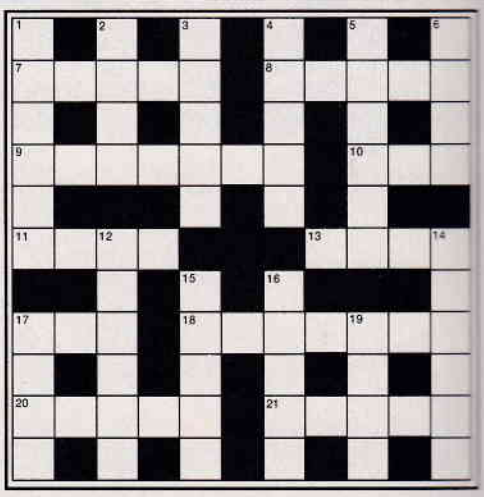
TICKETS for European games, internationals, World Cup and club Cup Finals wanted.
— Jean-Francois Leblanc, Rue Nationale 22, 4300 Waremme, Belgium.

for Sale

LOW PRICES — scarves, posters, pennants, programmes etc. for sale.
— Dragos Dita, Str. Godeanu Bl. 118/15, Ploiesti Vest, Romania.

WORLD SOCCER CROSSWORD

COMPILED BY
Christine Ansell



Clues Across

7. Northern Ireland's Inver Park club from County Antrim (5)
8. Hungary's keeper who won a 1991 championship medal with Honved (5)
9. Coach to Argentina's 1978 Cup-winners (7)
10. and 11. Club from Norway's capital, promoted to Division one in '91 (3,4)
11. See 10 Across
13. Porto custodian who ousted Silvino from Portugal's national side (4)
17. Former French international in AS Monaco's midfield (3)
18. The Greeks from Athens' Rizoupoleos (7)
20. Fiorentina's Brazilian midfield general (5)
21. Versatile Liverpool and Scotland defender formerly at Ayr United (5)

Clues Down

1. Brazil & Napoli midfielder omitted from Falcao's 1991 Copa America squad (6)
2. Parma's Belgian international defender (4)
3. Spanish Second Division side from Vigo (5)
4. 1982 World Cup hosts (5)
5. Romanian goalkeeper with Dinamo Bucharest's "double" winners (6)
6. French side from the Greland Stadium (4)
12. Former Everton centre-half in England's 1970 World Cup side (6)
14. Ex-Australian skipper with Roda JC in Holland (6)
15. Romanian midfield star at Feyenoord (5)
16. Singapore-born central defender of Wales and Crystal Palace (5)
17. Brazilian midfield master of the '58 and '62 World Cup finals (4)
19. Poznan's 1990 Polish League champions (4)

APRIL SOLUTION
Across: 1. Berthold 7. Ramos 8. Paine 9. Sedan 10. Wade 13. Reid 14. Danek 17. Legia 18. Immel 19. Van Aerle
Down: 1. Bari 2. Rummenigge 3. Hassan 4. Lupu 5. Sweden 6. Vina del Mar 11. Brolin 12. Farina 15. Lasa 16. Blue

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ANSWERS IN THE JUNE ISSUE, AND WATCH OUT FOR MORE WORLDWIDE QUIZZES AND WORLD SOCCER PRIZES IN THE FUTURE.

---

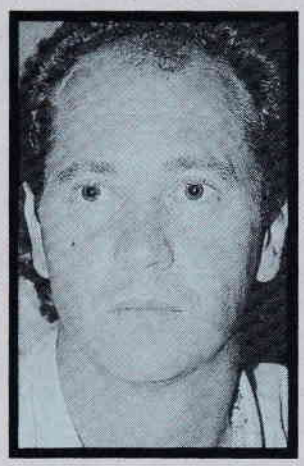
1. Name the eight current Football League managers who played full internationals for England during the 1980s.

2. Who were the last club to win a European trophy in their debut season in Europe?

3. Name Borussia Dortmund's ground.

4. Which player scored a goal for an English club last season, signed for that club, but never played a match for them?

5. Which Mexican club does former Brazil midfielder Falcao now manage?



Question 5 . . . Falcao.

6. Why did Real Madrid's Emilio Butragueno begin the recent league match against Real Burgos wearing the number 14 shirt?

7. Toto Schillaci was leading scorer in the 1990 World Cup with six goals. Who was second with five?

Question 7 . . . Schillaci.

8. Which two former Arsenal players have managed Tottenham since the war?

9. Who was suspended from the final of the 1992 African Nations' Cup?

10. Who knocked Marseille out of the Champions' Cup this season?

11. Spanish club Barcelona play their home games at Nou Camp. In which country do Barcelona play at the Monumental?

12. What is the more common name of the club sometimes known as Crvena Zvezda Beograd?

13. Name the eight managers of the finalists at this summer's European Championship

14. Who scored the first goal of the 1994 World Cup?

15. Who was the last Scotsman to score three goals in a full international against England?

16. Yomiuri recently won the First Division Championship for the second season running — in which country?

17. Who was on the losing side in two Champions' Cup finals which were both won by Liverpool?

18. Argentine goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea now plays for which South American club?

19. Name the player who has appeared for clubs in Australia, Belgium and Italy and is now playing in England.

20. West Ham United won the Cup-winners' Cup in 1965. Which club did they beat in the final?

Question 20 . . . West Ham United.

Compiled by
JOHN KELLY

The

KEIR RADNEDGE

COMMENTARY FROM DALLAS

WORLD CUP EFFORT TAKES OFF IN DALLAS

BUT THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT OF WORK AHEAD

THE SHAPE and style of the next World Cup finals, in the United States, are slowly unravelling.

A World Cup symposium, organised here in Dallas by sponsors American Airlines, shone new light on several issues and exposed misconceptions about others

I have never doubted the US hosts' organisational ability. In staging terms, the 1994 World Cup will be executive class

Venue organisers are activating stadium and facility plans; McDonalds are on board as sponsors with General Motors favourites to follow suit; the Coin Bill, needed to raise £30million finance, may at last gain Senate approval; and a complex network/cable/pay-TV hybrid is about to be concluded to guarantee live TV coverage throughout the US.

All this was clarified by the ubiquitous Alan Rothenberg, president not only of the US federation but also of the local World Cup organising committee.

Precisely which games go where will be announced at FIFA's summer Congress, on June 30 or July 1. The Rose Bowl, at Pasadena, remains favourite for the Final. Dallas, which is almost certain to be the International Broadcasting Centre, may well earn — for logistical reasons — matches up to and including a semi-final.

Plastic

That does not mean that the Cotton Bowl in Dallas is a perfect venue. Stadium manager Ramon Mingez estimates it will need a £20million redevelopment plan to come up to scratch. And that is based on a plan which appears to underestimate TV/radio/pressbox requirements.

The Cotton Bowl is to revert, permanently, to natural turf from the present plastic sponge from next year. Officials intend "launching" the new pitch at the CONCACAF Gold Cup in June, 1993. Seats will be scooped out in the corners to provide a pitch of World Cup width.

So far, so good in Dallas. But it was disconcerting to find that Pontiac, Detroit, is still experimenting to find how natural turf may be laid and preserved in the Silverdome.

You can also expect howls of protest, in two years' time, from nations who will be sent to Giants' stadium, New York. It is clear that, in FIFA's desperation to claim a New York venue, pitch width regulations will be sacrificed.

The Italians may feel somewhat bitter about that. The 1990 organisers spent millions ensuring standard pitch dimensions in all their stadia.

The corollary is this: if the US, with their high standard facilities, need to spend so much on just the Cotton Bowl, how many other countries can ever afford to host the World Cup?

Will the World Cup, for example, ever reach an African audience? It would surely be immoral to expect a nation in the developing world to fund a World Cup hosting when local populations remain in such need.

Let's clear up one misconception popular among even those who should know better.

Much of the non-US media has confused fans worldwide over the TV arrangements. These are not in doubt. The European Broadcasting Union is organising World Cup coverage for the rest of the world.

The only issue outstanding has been coverage WITHIN the US. This, Rothenberg assured me, is about to be resolved. And US viewers will not find match coverage interrupted by advertising. This is NOT to say there will not be advertising — if you follow. Adverts may be mixed over the action, framed around the action, or run across the screen below the action. But that, again, will affect only viewers in the US.

The only consequence of US TV needs which may be felt abroad concerns kick- off times.

Weekend matches will kick off in mid-afternoon, i.e. European evenings. Midweek matches may kick-off in the evening and thus be late-night viewing in Europe. Also, to allow US broadcasters a heavy run of pre-match commercials, matches may kick off at five or seven minutes past the hour.

As for scheduling, teams and fans should prepare for a lively time.

The Americans will group their nine stadia into three "packages" of three. That means two four-team groups being based on each three-venue "package." In the past, the seeded nation has played all three first-round matches in one venue.

In 1994, however, the seed plays two matches in one venue and then travels to another venue for Match 3.

Protect

Sounds complex. American Airlines believe their computer system can come up with a perfect, inter-changeable transport and accommodation programme.

Let's hope so, or there will be an awful lot of angry and travel-weary fans floating around.

That brings us to security.

American stadia do not have fences. So far no decision has been reached on how to protect the pitch and those performing on it.

Perhaps a human security cordon. Perhaps a glass wall.

The challenge for the US organisers is to find a solution which is not counter-productive in terms of event image.

In Argentina, Spain, Mexico and even Italy the sight of security guards, soldiers and police — armed to a greater or lesser extent — was accepted as standard security precaution.

The Americans, for a string of social and political reasons, cannot do this. Awkward.

But, the one abiding impression of US World Cup officials at work is that

Nacional set the ball rolling

AMERICA was both a winner and a loser at the opening of the Dallas Cup.

Winner because the tournament remains one of the modern wonders of the youth soccer world; loser because Dallas Storm lost 1-0 to Nacional of Uruguay in the match which followed the formal opening ceremony.

Executive director Bill Stroube was delighted with a turn-out of 143 teams (boys and girls, ages 12 to 19), officials and referees from 60 countries for the event's 13th edition.

Organisation calls for more than 1,000 volunteers. Their work and enthusiasm was later viewed at first hand by Joao Havelange — and you can be sure that FIFA's president does not lightly bestow an event with the sonorous dignity of his presence.

Havelange was due to combine his visit with a quick once-over at the luxurious local Aerobics Centre (founded by Dr Kenneth Cooper, of Cooper Test fame).

Texans do have a way of looking after their guests!

A full report on the event, sponsored by American Airlines, will appear in next month's *WORLD SOCCER*.

Threadbare . . . the Cotton Bowl (left) needs major redevelopment. Hopeful . . . Rothenberg (above).

confidence that they will come up with all the solutions.

The most thorny has been put on ice: it concerns the creation of a national professional league.

The outside world was under the firm impression that one condition of granting the US the 1994 finals was swift action to relaunch a credible club-style championship.

That has gone out of the window. Rothenberg said the launch date is now 1995. And that, in itself, is conditional on the creation of a viable commercial package.

Rothenberg believes the wave of soccer enthusiasm generated by the World Cup in June and July 1994 will still be flowing strongly enough almost a year later for the league's successful launch.

I have my doubts but I'll be happy to be proved wrong.

National coach Bora Milutinovic admits he would like a league in place earlier as an aide to his World Cup preparations.

But, like politics, soccer management is the art of the possible. Milutinovic has already planned an ingenious preparatory mixture involving cleverly-timed training camps plus European fixtures to accommodate the Europe-based players.

Milutinovic and Rothenberg are optimists. The evidence so far is that they have plenty to be optimistic about.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE REFS GONE?

ENGLAND'S decision to allow the likes of George Courtney, John Martin and Co to carrying on refereeing beyond the age limit has backfired spectacularly.

Not one English referee can be found among the 15 who will officiate at the finals of the European championship next month.

Whatever happened to the proud boast that English referees are the best in the world? Clouded and enshrouded in the committee rooms, it seems.

The FA, in effect, decided to RAISE the referees' domestic retiring age at a time when FIFA had decided to LOWER the international limit.

The end result is that younger English officials, such as Joe Worrall, are considered to lack the experience necessary for top international appointments.

One other problem holds back English referees: the time it takes to progress through the system.

In Italy, if a referee has not taken a first division match by his mid-30s, he is past it. In England, such youthful promotion is virtually impossible.

I don't know whether professional refereeing is the answer. I don't understand why changing the pay rate should improve a referee's eyesight. But attitudes to refereeing promotion must change. The arrival of the Premier League should be the opportunity to grasp this nettle.

Unfortunately, the leadership appear to lack the will, interest and vision to tackle anything beyond the income column.

UEFA's legal minefield

UEFA'S commercial plans for the Champions' Cup next season look like a lawyer's delight.

The European federation has awarded the Luzern agency, TEAM, full rights to arrange television and advertising for the 24 matches of the two semi-finals groups.

This means that the eight clubs must hand over all commercial and TV control of these money-spinning matches to UEFA.

Can you imagine the commercial and television partners of Real Madrid, Milan and Marseille agreeing to waive their existing, long-term, multi-million contracts?

Of course not.

A legal and political war looms which could make Flamengo's challenge to FIFA (see South American News) look minor league stuff.

UEFA may find that, rather than stifle the big clubs' superleague ambitions, they have played into their hands.

ANOTHER READER?

MY MOAN in this column about attempts to codify sportsmanship has been echoed in the corridors of power by Rinus Michels, no less.

Holland's manager, with the support of the other Euro 92 bosses, has proposed scrapping the Fair Play trophy before the kick-off in Stockholm.

My complaint about the Fair Play industry is that sportsmanship is a question of spirit and attitude; codify it, define it, and you destroy it.

Michels argues simply that the Fair Play trophy is the one no team wants to win because it invariably goes to losers and implies they did not try hard enough.

Michels wants UEFA to institute a Style Award. This would encompass disciplinary records but also, perhaps, a corner count PLUS the subjective judgment of a panel of uninvolved managers.

Good idea from a great manager.

Not so simple for France

FIFA's summer congress will be one of the most important for years.

Congress must decide the venue for the 1998 World Cup finals. France remain favourites. But, as political turmoil engulfs the Mitterand presidency, do not be surprised if Morocco start to gather votes.

Congress must express its determination to crack down on the player transfer agents who, scandalously, are turning South American and, latterly, African youngsters into so much horse-flesh.

Congress must oversee the first steps in a reshaping of European football: depending on how credible are the membership candidacies of the republics emerging from eastern European fragmentation.

A TEMPTING OFFER

A PAT on the back is due to the embattled Football Association.

They have done their level best to come up with a varied travel plan to suit supporters who want to attend the finals of the European Championship.

In the past, the FA have been accused of allowing officially-endorsed travel companies to fleece the travelling fans. That, in turn, has tempted fans to go it alone to World Cups and European Championships, increasing the security problems.

This time the FA are pointing fans in the direction of Travel Management, of Leamington. A full range of packages is available, from five-star luxury down to a first-three-matches coach/camping tour priced at £295 (excluding ticket costs). Considering the cost of living in Sweden, that's not bad at all.

CAREFUL WITH THAT BACK PASS!

HERE'S a warning to the gentlemen of the International Board who will be asked, this month, to ban the backpass: think carefully.

The idea was the subject of experiment at last year's World Junior Championship in Italy.

Of all the law-cracking schemes thrown up to "improve" the game ahead of USA '94 this is the one which has survived a critical battering.

To be specific, the proposal is that a goalkeeper may not handle a backpass from one of his own players made from outside the penalty area. If he does so, he concedes an indirect free kick.

Proponents say this will reduce time- wasting and put defenders under the extra pressure likely to produce more mistakes and more goals.

I have my doubts and this is why:

- **A defender under pressure will put the ball into the crowd thus breaking the flow of play and giving his team time to regroup in defence.**
- **Defenders not under pressure will run the ball back into the penalty box to play it to the goalkeeper's hands, thus increasing the time-waste element.**
- **Backpasses already produce mistakes and goals.**
- **The World Cup qualifiers have already begun under one set of rules; it would be wrong to change them in midstream. That could also provide one nation with advantages over another, since the timing of the new rule's introduction would have to vary from one country to another.**
- **None of the rule-fiddling undertaken over the past 30 years has brought the desired result: the goalkeeper-steps rule is still a mess after a stream of retouching; the offside variation to allow an attacking player to stand level with the penultimate defender has proved unenforceable — indeed, it has given the sweeper system new life.**

Change for the sake of change would be the worst change of all.

Cautious . . . Wilson Gottardo (left), seen here in action against Bragantino's Marco Aurelio, chose his words carefully when commentating on the problems at Flamengo.

THE FLAMENGO LEMMING

BY BRIAN **HOMEWOOD**

FLAMENGO president Marcio Braga must have been a kamikaze pilot or a lemming in his previous existence.

From his recent behaviour it seems that Braga is supervising the possible destruction of his own club.

Until he took over, Flamengo were one of the biggest, best-known and most illustrious clubs in Brazil. But they have now been banned from international games and from selling players abroad for two years, a punishment which will almost certainly spell financial disaster, after their president got them into a court wrangle with the CBF and FIFA.

The club were given a lifeline when the CBF said the punishment would not be applied if they dropped their court cases. Yet far from heeding this advice, Flamengo announced they were taking out ANOTHER lawsuit against Joao Havelange, Sepp Blatter and Co., and ANOTHER lawsuit against the CBF.

This was akin to tying a block of concrete around their ankles, jumping into a shark-infested pool and then throwing in an electric fire just to make sure.

The whole sordid affair began after Ricardo Teixeira, FIFA president Havelange's son-in-law (below), had been "re-elected" as CBF president in July. Flamengo decided to take out a lawsuit in a civil court against the farcical re-election process.

Good for Flamengo, everyone thought at the time. After all, Teixeira had been nothing but trouble for the Brazilian game since he took up the CBF presidency in 1989, and yet here he was getting another four-year term simply because voting was restricted to the 27 state federation presidents, with whom he had spent two years exchanging favours.

All Flamengo wanted, it seemed, was for the clubs to have a say as well.

Things began to get complicated in October when news of the lawsuit reached FIFA, who are paranoid about football matters going to civil courts (and therefore outside their control).

Court action leads to lost lifeline

FIFA threatened not just to punish Flamengo but also to suspend the CBF for failing to handle the situation. Faxes were exchanged between the CBF and FIFA, Teixeira and Braga had a fruitless meeting in Rio, and eventually FIFA banned the club from international football until they withdrew their lawsuit.

By this time, it should have been clear that Flamengo were simply getting themselves into trouble. Braga saw it differently and decided on the unprecedented step of suing FIFA in a Zurich court.

When FIFA received a message telling them that the case was about to begin, the alarm bells began ringing in general secretary Blatter's office.

Once again Blatter (above) set about sending threatening faxes to the CBF. "We have to inform you that (Flamengo) has initiated legal proceedings against FIFA," said the fax.

"We take a very serious view of the matter, considering that it is the first time any legal action has ever been taken against FIFA . . . bearing in mind the gravity of the situation, we may have to suspend the CBF."

The CBF were given 24 hours to do something or face a ban which could have meant their elimination from the 1994 World Cup.

"This will be the end of Brazilian football," proclaimed Teixeira. "The responsibility lies entirely with the president of Flamengo."

"The responsibility lies entirely with the president of the CBF," proclaimed the president of Flamengo at almost exactly the same moment.

Not even the prospect of getting Brazil knocked out of the World Cup and thereby becoming the most unpopular man in the country's history was enough to make him budge.

"Flamengo will not back down under any circumstances and we will take this to the United Nations (!!!!) if necessary," Braga added.

After 23 tense hours, the CBF announced a solution.

Curiously, this involved imposing almost exactly the same punishment that FIFA had imposed last year: Flamengo were banned from all international games, in Brazil or abroad, competitive or friendly, for two years and from any transfer transactions with foreign clubs for a similar period.

Even more curiously, the very next day FIFA lifted their ban on Flamengo and announced that the CBF were safe (ie would not be suspended).

Brazilian football directors, who may not know much about football but are razor sharp at sporting legislation, suggested that this course of events meant Flamengo could have won their case if it had gone to court.

That case was based on the argument that FIFA could not suspend them because they are not directly affiliated to FIFA. According to Vasco director Eurico Miranda, FIFA's behaviour suggests they may suddenly have realised they could have lost.

By pressing the CBF into taking action, FIFA could therefore lift the ban without actually looking as if they had lifted it, and avoid a potentially disastrous court defeat.

Was Flamengo's moral victory worth the price, though? President Braga seemed to think so.

He announced a NEW lawsuit against FIFA, this time demanding compensation for the damages caused by a ban that Flamengo say FIFA never should have imposed, and he threatened to take out one against the CBF as well, on the grounds that Flamengo were not directly affiliated to them either, but to the Rio de Janeiro State Federation, who are in turn affiliated to the CBF.

The clubs, fans and players, however, were clearly sick to the back teeth of seeing their club punished because of the presidents' antics.

"Once again, the players are paying for the actions of the directors," commented defender Wilson Gottardo, without directly criticising the president.

The consequences could be dire. Brazilian clubs depend on excursions abroad and sales of players to European clubs to keep them financially afloat.

Flamengo, are no exception, and were struggling even before the ban was imposed. Now their lifeline has been cut off.

PETROVIC FOR PENAROL

BY ERIC **WEIL**

YUGOSLAV coach Ljubo Petrovic (above), who took Red Star Belgrade to the European Champions' Cup last year, has joined Penarol, "to take them back to their former glory" as president Washington Cataldi said.

Penarol have played in the Libertadores Cup on most occasions (26), but they have not been in it since 1989.

Cataldi said Petrovic received 200,000 dollars when he signed the contract, but gave no details of bonuses.

Petrovic made his debut with the team in a friendly against Argentina's big club, River Plate, which Penarol won 1-0, and he asked club officials to arrange friendlies to get the team ready for the Uruguayan Championship.

The goal against River Plate was scored by Costa Rican international Roy Meyers.

One of the curiosities of the game is that Uruguay, the country which in relation to size has exported most players all over the world, should now have "imports" from, of all places, Central America.

Nacional, Uruguay's other big club, have three Central Americans — brothers Julio and Jorge Dely Valdez from Panama and Javier Wanchope from Costa Rica.

President Londono resigns

ONCE CALDAS — now Once Philips — early leaders in the fledgling 1992 season, are a modest team from Manizales, who have not won a title since 1950 and are not expected to win one this year either.

The major news has involved two of Colombian football's highest profiles: the president of the Colombian FA, Leon Londono, and the Nacional team coach elect Hernan Dario Gomez (below).

Londono made the headlines by resigning, saying: "I'm not selling myself anymore. My dignity comes first."

Over the past few months critics had been sniping at Londono and the FA in general over the way things were being run and after 30 years in the game Londono finally decided to quit.

He will remain a member of FIFA until 1998.

Gomez, Atletico Nacional's coach, caused a stir with comments about referee Jose Cuervo following a game against Deportivo Cali in Medellin. Having seen his team lose 2-1, Gomez accused Cali's president, Carlos Arcesio Paz, of "buying" the referee — an assertion not designed to ease tensions between the two cities.

Once Gomez had cooled down from his initial frustration he apologised unreservedly to Paz, describing him as honest, capable and as a friend. Subsequently, the Colombian FA hit Gomez with a two-match ban.

On the field Gomez now has Rene Higuita back in goal following his wretched spell in Spain. His first two games showed the familiar inconsistency.

His debut, a Copa Libertadores game against Peru's Sport Boys in Medellin, was marked by one awful mistake that led to a goal and a less than auspicious evening in general. Two days later, Higuita was brilliant in a 0-0 draw against Junior Barranquilla.

Omar Franco, Nacional's goalkeeper at the end of last season, has been dropped after winning a championship.

That also happened to him in 1989, when Millonarios dropped him for Sergio Goycochoea.

At least Franco is lucky that he is not an active fan of Millonarios, such has been the season in Bogota so far, ignoring the civic scandals and daily power cuts.

The close season brought a new coach, Moises Pachon, and the departure of most of the experienced players — one of whom openly lamented that nobody wanted to play for the famous club anymore.

They have been rebuilding with youth, which really represents a payroll cut.

A crushing opening defeat of the season, registration problems with new foreigners Russo and Diaz from Argentina and the loss of new striker Peter Mendez (he needed surgery on his left knee and a short period of rest in Uruguay) added up to a miserable start.

Four games into his tenure, Pachon is under pressure.

No points for a draw

CHILE are experimenting with a new points system to increase goals.

Winning teams scoring more than three get an extra point, but on the other hand there are no points for draws.

The system is now being tried in the Copa Chile, a tournament in which all First and Second Division teams take part split into six regional sections — 32 teams in all.

The leading teams of each section advance to a knock-out.

Universidad Catolica, who should be challenging for honours again this season, although they are not doing so well in the "Copa Chile" while engaged in the Libertadores Cup, have looked to Paraguay to strengthen their squad, with internationals Rogelio Delgado and Jose Cadoso.

NOW FOR THE MASTERS

CONMEBOL, the South American Football Confederation, are producing yet another cup tournament.

Recently details were announced of the CONMEBOL Cup, on the lines of the UEFA Cup, for clubs not involved in the Libertadores Cup or the Super Cup.

Now there are plans for a Masters Cup, to be contested by winners of the Super Cup. To get into that, you have to win the Libertadores, so the thinking behind the new scheme seems to be that The Masters will be the Cup of Cups.

Winners

The Super Cup is now in its fifth year, and the four previous winners are due to meet in Buenos Aires May 26-31.

They are Racing Club of Argentina (1988), Boca Juniors of Argentina (1989), Olimpia of Paraguay (1990) and Cruzeiro of Brazil (1991).

Argentina, the South American champions, are to take part in the King Fahd Intercontinental Cup in Saudi Arabia, October 15-20.

Other champion nations to take part are United States (North and Central America), Ivory Coast (Africa), and Saudi Arabia (Asia). No mention so far of a European contestant.

ATLANTE KEEP UP THE PACE

ATLANTE, one of the oldest teams in the Mexican First Division, continued with the best record — 40 points from 30 games — with eight games to go to the play-offs.

The top two of each of the four groups meet in a two-legged knock-out to decide further progress.

America, now under former Brazilian national coach Falcao, face a fight to stay in a qualifying spot.

They were five points behind in Group Four.

Falcao, already criticised, complains that there are too many stoppages in games, and says he has counted an average of only 48 minutes of play out of 90.

Luis Garcia of UNAM, who top Group One, is top scorer again with 19 goals, followed by Chilean Ivo Basay (Necaxa), Daniel Guzman (Atlante) and Zague (America) with 15.

All smiles . . . Maradona with [illegible]

DIEGO THE TV TOPPER

DIEGO MARADONA has regained a lot of his lost popularity through a new role . . . as a television performer.

He has been taking part in a show on Sunday evenings, which has gone to top place in the ratings.

In addition to chat, the organisers are now showing a five-a-side tournament played in the studio, featuring big names from soccer, other sports and the outside world.

The Argentine President, soccer-made Carlos Menem, was due to captain a team in one match. He turned up but did not play, having been hurt in training.

Maradona had been saying some uncomplimentary things about President Menem in the past, but they were all smiles as they posed for the cameras.

As for real football, Maradona is still keeping everybody waiting while serving his ban for drugs offences, which ends in June. Some reporters were told that he'll play again as soon as possible, others that he won't. Only time will tell.

Maracana is falling down

Crumbling . . . Maracana needs refurbishment which will cost around 30 million dollars.

MARACANA Stadium in Rio is renowned throughout the game . . . but it might not be in use for much longer.

The arena, built for the 1950 World Cup as the biggest in the world, has been suffering from the downturn in the national team's fortunes.

Brazil no longer pack Maracana, and clubs in the city know to their cost that it is uneconomical as a base for league fixtures.

Even worse, the structure is in need of repairs which the authorities say will cost about 30 million dollars. Not surprisingly, not a great deal has been done so far, and the beautiful stadium is falling into disrepair.

On a happier note, international striker Bebeto is leading Vasco da Gama's challenge for the championship.

His spell of nine goals in 10 games put Vasco top, while champions Sao Paulo slid down the table with five successive defeats, one of them a humiliating 3-0 Cup beating against Criciuma, the Second Division club who won the trophy last season and so qualified for the Libertadores Cup.

Sao Paulo coach Tele Santana criticised his squad for not doing their best, but the players later rejected reports that they wanted him to leave.

A trip to Bolivia put things right again. Despite the difficulties posed by playing at 12,000 feet above sea level, Sao Paulo took three points from two games against San Jose and Bolivar. Then they hammered Atletico Paranaense 5-0 in their next league game. But they still have some ground to make up.

Unfancied Sport Recife were unbeaten in their first nine games — five of them 0-0 draws — before losing the tenth to Vasco

Atletico Mineiro, usually among the title contenders, took only three points from 10 games, whereupon manager Jair Perreira resigned.

Three others lost their jobs in the traditional "dance of the managers". Jair Picerni resigned at newly-promoted Paysandu, while Luis Antonio and Rubens Minelli were sacked by Bahia and Santos respectively.

Newell's in old form

ROSARIO club Newell's Old Boys, who field only players coming up from the junior teams, are back in contention to defend their National League title.

After winning last season's first round and playing poorly in the second, they beat second-round winners Boca Juniors for the 1990-91 title, on penalties.

This season they finished almost at the bottom of the first round, but lead by a point after five games in the second. They need to stay at the top to defend the title in the three-match play-off with the first-round winners, River Plate.

Newell's Old Boys are playing full teams in both League and mid-week Libertadores Cup matches and are doing well in both — although in their latest match they beat bottom club Gimnasia y Esgrima de La Plata only 1-0 with a penalty, in time added on for stoppages.

San Lorenzo, the other Libertadores Cup contestants, have either fielded reserves or tired first-teamers in National Championship games and are next to bottom with only two points out of 10 . . . which does not unduly worry them. Relegation is worked out on average points obtained over three seasons.

First-round winners River Plate won their first three games but missed the goals and leadership of injured Ramon Diaz.

Boca Juniors opened with a 1-0 defeat by Velez Sarsfield and won the next three, but their play fails to convince and both big clubs wait to add more fire-power to their squads.

Boca Juniors have brought back former international striker Alberto Marcico from Toulouse, France, for a reported 650,000 dollars, while Oscar Acosta jumped at the chance of returning to join River Plate after a season in Japan.

Marcico . . . back in Argentina with Boca Juniors.

While Argentina continue to export top players, 13 of the 20 National A Division teams have Paraguayans on their books this season.

They are scoring goals, too — Carlos Torres for Racing Club, Felix Torres for Estudiantes de La Plata, international Gustavo Neffa for Union de Santa Fe, Robert Cabanas, a former international for Boca Juniors, international Ramon Hicks for Independiente, and Alfredo Mendoza for Newell's Old Boys.

PARAGUAY:

THE newly-formed union under veteran striker Raul Amarilla almost stopped the start of the Paraguayan National Championship by enforcing a ruling that all contracts must be signed 10 days before the start.

They were not, and the players refused to take part, but were eventually persuaded to do so.

The national championship (known as the Tournament of the Republic) has the 12 First Division teams playing with 12 leading clubs from various leagues in the country, in six sections in the preliminary round.

The top two of each section advance to the knock-out stage and at press time 10 teams had made it: Olimpia (now coached by Argentine Roberto Perfumo and with Amarilla still shining), defending champions Cerro Porteno, Sportivo Luqueno, Presidente Hayes, Atletico Colegiales, 12 de Octubre, Guarani, Primero de Marzo, Cerro Cora and Nacional.

The First Division champions, Sol de America, had been eliminated, probably more concerned by the Libertadores Cup.

But the union had again called for a strike, and many players still had not signed new contracts.

PERU:

THERE is no limit on foreign players, and some of the big clubs are packing them in.

Champions Sporting Cristal's latest signing, Ecuadorian international Raul Aviles, has brought the number of foreign players on their books to nine, four of them Argentines.

Alianza Lima — where Argentine coach Pedro Dellacha replaced Yugoslav Simo Vilic, who died during the close season — have signed four Uruguayans (on the new coach's recommendation) to add to three foreigners already on their books.

Thirteen of the 16 clubs are under foreign coaches, including Yugoslav Ivan Brzic at Universitario, but Sporting Cristal are still under a Peruvian, former international Juan Carlos Oblitas.

The 16 clubs left in the First Division — the top eight from the Lima area and the top eight from the rest of the country — have been resisting political pressure to have their numbers increased again.

The latest Peruvian FA compromise is to organise a parallel tournament for those clubs left out of the new First Division, with the winner getting a chance to play for a place in the Libertadores Cup.

The 16 are resisting this pressure — presumably coming from provincial senators in areas left without First Division clubs — and are refusing to start the championship under these conditions.

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diary

World Soccer's news service conducted by

KEIR RADNEDGE

MONDAY, MARCH 9

BRAZIL: *Vasco da Gama surprisingly lose 2-1 at home to Guarani in the National Championship.*

ENGLAND: *Hernia trouble halts Jesper Olsen's plans to start a trial with Nottingham Forest . . . all three political parties back England's bid to host the 1996 European Championship finals . . . former Sunderland striker Vic Halom is adopted as Liberal Democrat candidate for Sunderland North.*

GERMANY: *Hansa Rostock appoint Erich Rutemoller as caretaker to the season's end in place of Uwe Reinders.*

POLAND: *Police say five railway coaches were damaged by hooligan fans travelling on Sunday to watch Lechia Gdansk play Polger Chemik in Szczecin.*

PORTUGAL: *Sporting sack Brazilian coach Mario Marinho.*

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

ACTION: *Germany are held 1-1 by Scotland in their European Under-21 quarter-final opener.*

CROATIA: *Hajduk Split beat Dubrovnik 9-0 to maintain, after three games, their 100 per cent record in the new, inaugural championship.*

ENGLAND: *FA officials outline their Euro 96 bid to UEFA.*

PLAYER OF THE MONTH

ARON WINTER (Ajax) . . .

for the goal which beat Genoa in Italy in the first leg of their UEFA Cup semi-final (below).

JAPAN: *The JFA appoints its first foreign manager in Dutchman Marius Johan Ooft, general manager of Utrecht. He replaces Kenzo Yokoyama next month.*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

ACTION: *Victories for Spain (2-0 v the US) in an international friendly and for Holland (2-1 v Sweden) and Denmark (5-0 v Poland) in the European Under- 21/Olympic qualifiers . . . in the South American club cup, Colombia's America beat Peru's Sport Boys 2-0 in group four; Defensor of Uruguay surprisingly lose 3-2 at home in Montevideo to Cerro Porteno of Paraguay in group five.*

FRANCE: *Michel Platini suggests that a penalty kick should be awarded instead of expulsion for a red card offence.*

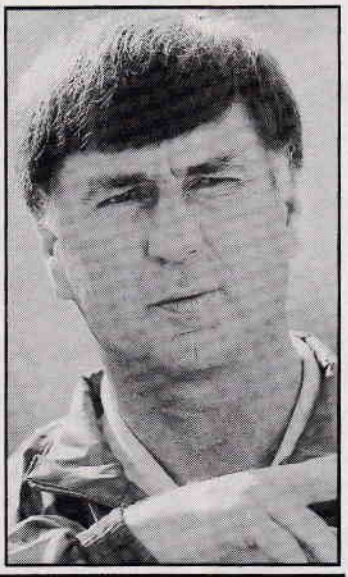
GERMANY: *Bayern Munich sponsors Opel announce that promotions executive (and former Bundesliga manager) Erich Ribbeck will take over as coach of Bayern from Soren Lerby for the rest of the season . . . Hamburg sack coach Gerd-Volker Shock.*

GREECE: *Old rivals Olympiakos and Panathinaikos draw 0-0 in the Cup quarter-finals first legs.*

ITALY: *Milan offer contract extensions to all three Dutchmen — Rijkaard, Gullit and Van Basten.*

SWITZERLAND: *FIFA decide that Juventus have full rights to complete the purchase of German midfielder Andy Moller from Eintracht Frankfurt. Moller had objected to Juventus' decision to loan him on to Atalanta.*

TURKEY: *National boss Sepp Piontek (below) says he is determined to return to Denmark when his contract expires in 1994.*



TEAM(S) OF THE MONTH

SUNDERLAND and PORTSMOUTH . . .

Second Division sides proving, against all the odds, that dreams can still come true in the FA Cup.

Portsmouth striker Darren Anderton after scoring in the FA Cup semi-final.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

ACTION: *Italy win 2-1 away to Czechoslovakia in a European Under-21 quarter-final first leg.*

SWITZERLAND: *UEFA postpone a decision on who hosts Euro 96 but vote, this time round, against an expansion to 16 teams. That decision alone gives Holland and Portugal new hope of fighting England's bid.*

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

ITALY: *Juventus admit their interest in Karlsruhe striker Mehmet Scholl, son of an errant Turkish migrant worker.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

ACTION: *Monaco win away to Auxerre on penalties in the French Cup after a 2-2 draw; Marseille win 2-1 away to Istres . . . two goals from Zorc bring German league leaders Borussia Dortmund a 3-1 home win over outgoing champions Kaiserslautern.*

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

ACTION: *Juventus win 2-0 away to Cremonese in Italy but Milan, 2-0 winners over Bari, stay four points clear . . . Real Madrid slip up yet again in Spain, this time going down 1-0 at Logrones and allowing Barcelona (who hit back from 2-0 down to force a 2-2 draw away to Atletico Madrid) to pull level on points.*

MONDAY, MARCH 16

ENGLAND: *Gordon Banks, former World Cup-winning goalkeeper, is banned for seven years from receiving Cup Final tickets by the FA. Tottenham are censured and ordred to pay £2,500 costs of an inquiry into inadequate ticket record-keeping.*

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

ACTION: *The US beat South Korea 3-1 in an Olympic friendly in Los Angeles . . . South American club cup results include a 1-1 draw for defending title-holders Colo Colo away to fellow Chileans Coquimbo Unido in group one . . . Sao Paulo win 3-0 away to San Jose of Bolivia in group two after angry scenes between the players and coach Tele Santana over their domestic form. Several Sao Paulo players are given oxygen at the touchline during the second half in the 12,300-feet high Bolivian mining town of Oruro.*

ITALY: *Milan confirm Ruud Gullit must undergo surgery on his left knee after damaging a cartilage during Sunday's win over Bari . . . without Gullit, Milan lose 1-0 to Marseille in a televised friendly in France.*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

ACTION: *Brugge's away goal win over Atletico Madrid in the Cup-winners' Cup quarter-finals and Genoa's UEFA Cup win at Liverpool are highlights of the European club night . . . Morocco beat the United States 3-1 in a friendly in Casablanca.*

BRAZIL: *Top club Flamengo's legal action against the Brazilian confederation could, says FIFA, end in the country being suspended not only from FIFA for a violation of statutes but also from the World Cup.*

GERMANY: *Bayern Munich defender Roland Grahammer is banned for eight matches after being sent off for a retaliatory foul on Kaiserslautern's Guido Hoffmann.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

ACTION: *Torino beat B1903 1-0 to reach the UEFA Cup semi-finals.*

BELGIUM: *Manager Paul Van Himst recalls Scifo, Emmers and Grun for the friendly against France.*

BRAZIL: *Flamengo president Marcio Braga says he will not bu put off a legal complaint against the CBF "just to suit FIFA."*

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: *Sparta veteran Frantisek Chovanec is recalled to duty for the first time in 18 months, for the friendly against England.*

GERMANY: *Jorginho's representatives talk over a transfer from Leverkusen with Bayern Munich . . . Werder Bremen say the Cup-winners' semi-final against Galatasaray was worth £1.3million.*

HOLLAND: *Feyenoord suspended coach Hans Dorjee (for making critical public comments about the club) only hours after beating Tottenham to reach the Cup-winners' Cup semi-finals.*

ITALY: *Gianluca Vialli, suspended against San Marino, is recalled to Italy's squad for the friendly against Germany in Turin.*

UNITED STATES: *Dallas emerges as favourite to host the central broadcasting centre for the 1994 World Cuo finals.*

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: *Officials of the local federation protest to FIFA that tomorrow's World Cup opening qualifier should be declared null and void because rivals Puerto Rico's squad are almost all travelling on US passports.*

ITALY: *Genoa's UEFA Cup hero Carlos Aguilera says he will stay "if I am given a good contract" at the end of the season . . . Ruud Gullit's new operation is set for Monday . . . burglars ransack the home of Inter's Lothar Matthaus stealing, among other things, the golden ball he was awarded as 1990 European Footballer of the Year.*

SPAIN: *Madrid civil governor Segismundo Crespo says a 1990 law, banning flags and fireworks and offensive insignia, will be put into effect. This follows the death last weekend of a boy struck by a rocket flare during the game in Barcelona's Sarria stadium between Espanol and Cadiz . . . Hugo Sanchez says his ambition is to play for Mexico at the 1994 World Cup finals.*

SWITZERLAND: *The European club semi-finals draws are made in Geneva.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

ACTION: *The World Cup begins on the pitch with Puerto Rico winning 2-1 away to the Dominican Republic in Santo Domingo . . . Belgian leaders Anderlecht win 1- 0 away to Beveren . . . Marseille beat St Etienne 2-0 to stay two points clear of Monaco in France . . . Eintracht Frankfurt beat Bayern Munich 3-2 in Germany's match of the day . . . Gianluca Vialli is sent off as Sampdoria lose 1-0 away to Parma in an Italian Cup semi-final first leg.*

UNITED STATES: *Dallas city council says it will grant an initial £600,000 towards the cost of the broadcasting centre, if Dallas is — on Monday — confirmed among the USA '94 venues.*

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

ACTION: In the World Cup, St Lucia win 1-0 at home to St Vincent in the CONCACAF qualifiers . . . in the South American Club Cup Barcelona of Ecuador go top of group three thanks to a 1-0 win away to Universidad de los Andes in Merida, Venezuela . . . Danish champions Brondby draw 1-1 away to Silkeborg on the opening day of the new season . . . FC Porto virtually wrap up the league title thanks to a thrilling 3-2 win away to closest pursuers Benfica . . . Real Madrid (1-0 v La Coruna) and Barcelona (1-0 v Logrones) remain all square in Spain.

FRANCE: *Marseille president Bernard Tapie is one of the few socialist winners in local elections.*

ITALY: *FIGC president Matarrese drops Vialli from the Italy squad to face Germany, as punishment for his expulsion against Parma; manager Arrigo Sacchi calls up Roma's Ruggiero Rizzitelli as standby.*

MONDAY, MARCH 23

FRANCE: *Chris Waddle (right) says he hopes he may stay in France if Marseille release him at the season's end.*

ITALY: *Surgeon Marc Martens reports no complications during surgery on Ruud Gullit's left knee.*

UNITED STATES: *The nine USA '94 venues are named: Chicago, Dallas, East Rutherford (New Jersey), Boston (Foxboro), Los Angeles (Pasadena), Orlando, Pontiac (Detroit), San Francisco (Palo Alto), Washington. The Silverdome at Pontiac will stage indoor World Cup action for the first time.*

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

ACTION: *Scotland beat Germany 4-3 (5-4 on agg) in the European Under-21/Olympic qualifiers . . . Ireland and Switzerland draw 1-1 in an Under-21 friendly . . . Czechoslovakia lose 1-0 at home to England in a B international.*

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

ACTION: *A busy international evening, with victories for Holland (2-0 v Yugoslavia), Hungary (2-1 v Austria), Italy (1-0 v Germany), Turkey (3-2 in Luxembourg), Poland (2-0 v Lithuania) and the Irish Republic (2-1 v Switzerland) as well as home draws for Czechoslovakia (2-2 v England), France (3-3 v Belgium) and Scotland (1-1 v Finland) . . . the US win 2-1 away to Mexico in Mexico City in the Olympic qualifiers . . . Italy beat Czechoslovakia 2-0 in Padova in the European Under-21/Olympic quarter-final second leg; Poland draw 1-1 with Denmark; Sweden beat Holland 1-0.*

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

GERMANY: *Horst Koppel replaces Jurgen Gede as boss of bottom club Fortuna Dusseldorf . . . Willibald Kremer says he intends to quit as boss of MSV Duisburg at the season's end.*

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

GERMANY: *Horst Koppel's Dusseldorf reign opens with a 2-1 defeat away to Werder Bremen.*

ITALY: *Milan, Torino and Genoa all complain about having to release internationals for midweek friendly duty after Marco Van Basten, Enzo Scifo and Tomas Skuhravy all report back as doubtful for Sunday's games.*

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

ACTION: *Puerto Rico gain a place in the next round of World Cup CONCACAF qualifying when they are held 1-1 at home in San Juan by the Dominican Republic (but win 3-2 on aggregate) . . . Germany's match of the season ends as an exciting 2-2 between leaders Borussia Dortmund and pursuers Eintracht Frankfurt (one point adrift) . . . in an Italian league match played early to aid Torino's preparations for their UEFA Cup clash with Real Madrid, Torino draw 0-0 away to Inter. Both goalkeepers — Torino's Marchegiani and Inter's Abata — are sent off . . . Real Madrid regain a one-point lead in Spain: Madrid win 3-1 away to Albacete while Barcelona are held goalless away to Osasuna.*

CONTINUED OVER

Celtic's Gerry Creaney (dark shirt) in action for Scotland Under-21s against Germany.

OBITUARY

JUANITO (Full name: Juan Gomez): Tempermental, inspirational right winger with Atletico Madrid, Burgos and Real Madrid in the late 1970s and 1980s, who was killed in a car crash aged 37. Juanito was born in Fuengirola, where he kept a home. He scored 94 league goals, including 17 as top scorer in the 1983-84 season. He formed a brilliant attacking partnership with Carlos Santillana and was a member of Spain's squads at the 1978 and 1982 World Cups as well as the 1980 European Chanpionship. He played 34 times for Spain before retiring to a career in coaching. His ambition was to return, one day, as boss of Real Madrid.

CONTINUED

ALGERIA: *National boss Abdelhamid Kermali is sacked, along with six of the Algerian Nations' Cup squad, for their failure to successfully defend the title in January.*

RUSSIA: *A new league championship is set to begin tomorrow, replacing the old Soviet Supreme League. The league will involve two groups of ten clubs with the top eight competing in an end-of-season play-off system for titles and European places.*

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

ACTION: *In the World Cup CONCACAF qualifiers, St Vincent beat St Lucia 3-1 to qualify on a 3-2 aggregate . . . AEK win 3-0 away to Iraklis to regain sole league leadership in Greece . . . PSV beat Feyenoord 2-1 in Holland to celebrate Bobby Robson's return to the touchline after a spell in hospital. PSV thus stay four points clear of Ajax . . . Milan and Juventus are held to 1-1 draws by capital rivals Roma and Lazio respectively . . . Benfica thrash Espinho 6-0 in a Portuguese Cup quarter-final.*

MONDAY, MARCH 30

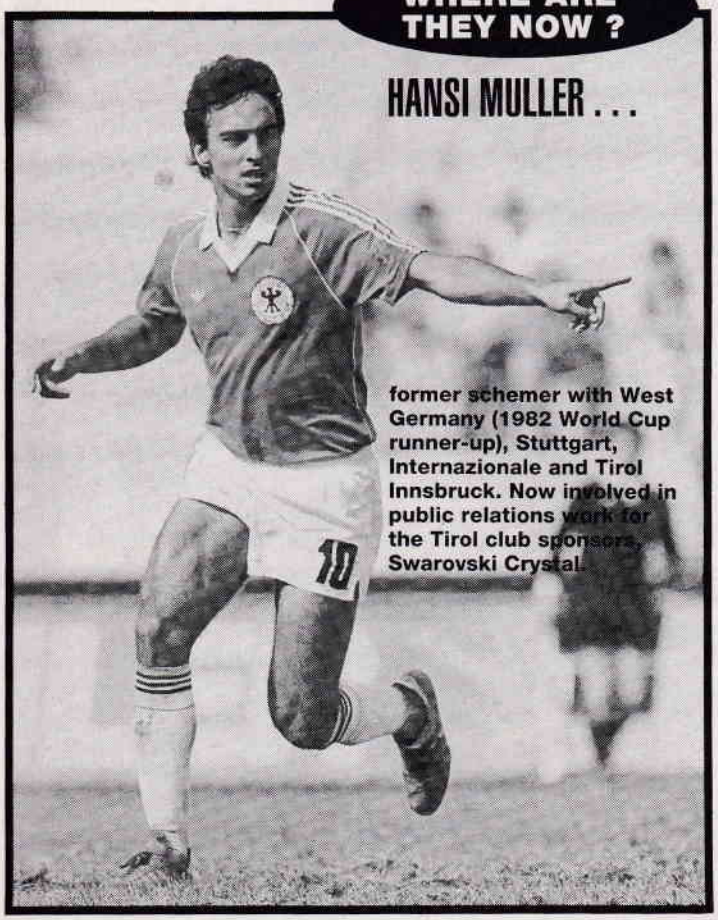
GERMANY: *Stuttgart's Matthias Sammer (right) agrees to join Internazionale at the season's end.*

SWEDEN: *In an odd legal case, a Swedish police chief is fined for breaching regulatiions in the way he herded up English fans after a rampage through a Stockholm shopping centre before a match against England in September, 1989.*

TUESDAY, MARCH 31

ARGENTINA: *Diego Maradona answers speculation about a return to Napoli, with a denial that he will ever play in Italy again.*

WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?



HANSI MULLER . . .

former schemer with West Germany (1982 World Cup runner-up), Stuttgart, Internazionale and Tirol Innsbruck. Now involved in public relations work for the Tirol club sponsors, Swarovski Crystal.

CROATIA: *The CFA announce plans for a June/July tour to Australia. Robert Prosinecki and Zvonimir Boban are among players named in a prospective 18-strong squad.*

ITALY: *The FIGC, under pressure from clubs, cancel the scheduled April 22 friendly against Holland . . . Genoa's preparation plans for their UEFA Cup tie against Ajax are upset by a row over bonuses.*

PORTUGAL: *Sporting Lisbon announce that Bobby Robson is expected in Lisbon on the forthcoming weekend to agree a two-year contract. Robson's end-of-season departure from PSV Eindhoven is already common knowledge.*

UNITED STATES: *Franz Beckenbauer agrees to provide the USSF with promotional help in the run-up to the 1994 World Cup.*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

ACTION: *Sampdoria's 3-1 win "away" to Champions' Cup-holders Red Star in Sofia is the highlight of semi-final night in Europe. Barcelona blow their instant chance of a place in the Chmapions' Cup Final by losing 1-0 away to Sparta Prague . . . Juventus and Milan draw 0-0 in a domestic Cup semi-final first leg.*

ITALY: *Gianluca Vialli is banned for two Italian League games after his domestic Cup semi-final expulsion . . . Milan president Silvio Berlusconi tells top European sports journalists that the European cups are now "a historical anachronism".*

SPAIN: *Atletico Madrid's veteran German midfielder, Bernd Schuster, causes local media panic when he announces his intention to leave Spain at the seeason's end.*

UNITED STATES: *Pele calls for radical law changes to sweep away "conservative influences" harming the game.*

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

HOLLAND: *National boss Rinus Michels calls on UEFA to scrap the Fair Play trophy at the European finals and institute a more reflective Style Award.*

SWEDEN: *UEFA president Lennart Johansson rules out of court a suggestion that a European Community supra-national tean be formed.*

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

FRANCE: *Marseille press on with a 3-1 win away to Nancy.*

GERMANY: *Leaders Borussia Dortmund suffer their first defeat of the year, beaten 2-1 by Nurnberg.*

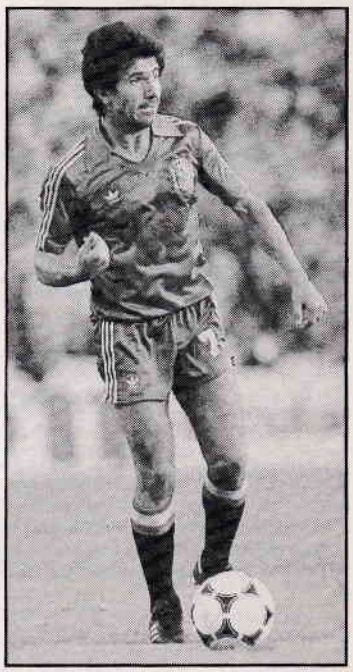
SPAIN: *Atletico Madrid's Bernard Schuster apologises for causing so much chaos with his midweek announcement about leaving Spanish football. It was all, he says, an April Fool joke — "I never dreamed it would get so out-of-hand."*

SATURDAY, APRIL 4

ACTION: *Youri Djorkaeff provides the two goals with which Monaco beat Auxerre 2-0 in the French League — following up their recent shoot-out victory over the same rivals in the Cup; Joel Bats plays his 500th League game, keeping goal for Paris Saint-Germain against Sochaux*

FRANCE: *Marseille president Bernard Tapie is appointed Minister for Urban Development in the new government.*

SPAIN: *Juanito (below), temperamental and charismatic hero of Real Madrid in the late 1970s and 1980s, is killed in a car crash.*



SUNDAY, APRIL 5

ACTION: *Milan thrash Sampdoria 5-1 in San Siro . . . Barcelona keep up the pursuit in Spain by thrashing La Coruna 4-1, inspired by the marksmanship of Julio Salinas; Real Madrid keep their noses in front by beating Burgos 2-0.*

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AFRICA'S BIG MEDAL CHANCE

BY MARK GLEESON

THE Barcelona Olympics football tournament presents Africa with a very realistic chance of a first medal.

Egypt and Morocco are certain to provide some stiff opposition for the 16-nation field, but Ghana will be the team to watch.

The Black Satellites qualified for Spain with a 10-1 aggregate thumping of Mauritius to serve notice of their capabilities.

The team they take to Barcelona, though, will be markedly different from the team who secured qualification. Coach Samuel Artey will be using the majority of their country's European-based professionals.

That will mean debuts at under-23 level in the final tournament for the likes of Anderlecht's Nii Lamptey, Isaac Asare and Yaw Preko, Torino's Mohammed Gargo and Richard Naawu, who plays for Waldhof Mannheim in Germany.

Emmanuel Duah, also on the books of Torino and scorer of the winning goal in the Under-17 World Cup in Italy last year, played in the two-legged fourth round tie against the Mauritians, displaying a confidence that belies his tender age of 17.

Ghana also are likely to include Kwamre Ayew of French club Metz, younger brother of African Footballer of the Year Abedi Pele Ayew, and defender Stanley Aboraah, so impressive at the African Nations' Cup.

Forceful

Bundesliga-based Ali Perle Ibrahim, originally in contention, is now ruled out with injury.

That means Maxwell Konadu, the dreadlocked striker from Ashanti Kotoko, will keep his place up front and might yet usurp the better-known European-based contingent. His forceful running and strong aerial power will be well suited for the Olympics stage, where the hot conditions will add to Ghana's advantage.

Konadu scored three goals in the final round tie against the Mauritians but the African qualifying tournament's leading scorer was Moham Salah Abou Gresiha of Egypt, who hit six in as many matches.

Egypt, whose Under-23 side disappointed in front of their home support at last year's All-Africa Games in Cairo, made up for their failure to finish in the medals with a 4-1 aggregate win over Zimbabwe in the final round.

Zimbabwe had shocked Egypt in the Games to ensure their early demise and the dismissal of German coach Dietrich Wiese, but were no match the second time round.

They missed Peter Ndlovu of Coventry City and Cyprus-based Agent Sawu for the first leg in Cairo, going down by three goals, and then were unable to fight back in the return in Bulawayo.

The closest tie of the round was that between Cameroon, winners of the All-Africa Games gold, and Morocco, whose senior team had been the first eliminated at the African Nations' Cup finals in January.

A goalless draw in Yaounde set the Moroccans up for a fine victory, with Badraoui opening the score in the return in Casablanca after six minutes and Dahja making sure of their trip two minutes from time with a second goal.

That served to keep German coach Werner Olk in a job after the debacle in Senegal, as it did in Egypt for former Army colonel Mohammed El-Gohari.

The Egyptians are no strangers to the Olympic tournament. They first played in 1920 and have participated eight times since then — the last in Los Angeles in 1984, where their fighting won them more notoriety than their football.

Ghana and Morocco have been finalists three times before, but none of the three teams representing Africa in Seoul four years ago return this time round.

Zambia secured Africa's best Olympics performance there with a 4-0 beating of Italy in the opening round group and a quarter-final place, where they were hammered by the West Germans.

ROAD TO BARCELONA

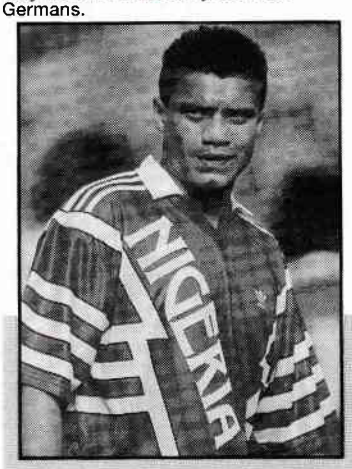
Opponents	Home	Away	Agg
EGYPT			
Sudan	2-0	2-1	4-1
Malawi	3-1	0-0	3-1
Zimbabwe	3-0	1-1	4-1
GHANA			
Guinea suspended			
Sierre Leone	2-1	2-2	4-3
Mauritius	6-0	4-1	10-1
MOROCCO			
Mauritania	6-0	0-0	6-0
Togo withdrew			
Cameroon	0-0	2-0	2-0

LEADING SCORERS

6 — Gresiha (Egypt)
4 — Shamo Quaye (Ghana)
Ablade Kumah (Ghana)
Ibrahim Kizito (Uganda)
3 — Konadu (Ghana)
Sabri Bouhali (Tunisia)

PREVIOUS AFRICAN FINALISTS

1920 — Egypt
1924 — Egypt
1928 — Egypt
1936 — Egypt
1948 — Egypt
1952 — Egypt
1960 — Egypt, Tunisia
1964 — Egypt, Ghana, Morocco
1968 — Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria
1972 — Ghana,Morocco, Sudan
1980 — Algeria, Nigeria, Zambia
1984 — Cameroon, Egypt, Morocco
1988 — Nigeria, Tunisia, Zambia



Agboola's double target

REUBEN AGBOOLA had never been to Africa before April last year. But within eight months, he emerged as one of the continent's top players, helping Nigeria to third place in the African Nations' Cup in Senegal.

Agboola, 29 (above), was born in London and still speaks with a broad Cockney accent.

His father was Nigerian, but until he played for Nigeria against Benin in Lagos last year, he had never been to the continent.

Agboola, now playing with Swansea City in the Third Division, started his career at Southampton, playing in the First Division alongside England international Mark Wright.

"Nigeria approached me to play for them when I was 18, but then I still had dreams of playing for England, so I did not accept the offer," he says.

Only last year did Agboola decide to try an international career in Africa. "My father went to the Nigerian Embassy in London and told them that I was keen to play, and soon after I got an invitation."

That was for the vital match against Benin.

Agboola says: "I was arrested at the airport in Lagos because I did not have a visa.

"It took some time for officials from the Nigerian FA to arrive and get me out."

Agboola's adventure continued as Nigerian officials rushed him around to get a passport in time.

"I was so bewildered I did not know what was going on. None of the Nigerian players knew who I was and when I arrived at the hotel I started to have second thoughts.

"The next day, a Saturday, was the day of the match, but I thought it was on the Sunday. I though we were only going to the stadium for a practice and when we arrived and I saw all the people, I though it was incredible how many people went to watch a training session.

"Little did I realise that we were about to play the game!"

Forgot

So Agboola helped in a 3-0 victory, and returned two weeks later for Nigeria's final qualifying match against Burkina Faso.

"That was the game when one of the officials forgot to bring our shorts and we had to cut off our tracksuit trousers at the knee to play."

Injury to Ben Iorha in Nigeria's training camp ahead of the African Nations' Cup meant a definitive starting place for Agboola in the finals and he played in all the matches in Senegal, except the quarter-final against Zaire, when he was out with an injury.

"The Cup was certainly the highlight of my career — a fabulous experience," he says.

Now Agboola has two new ambitions: to win a place with Nigeria among the finalists at the World Cup in the United States in 1994, and to move from English football to a team on the European continent.

"I would really like a change after more than 250 matches in the English League," he says.

AFRICAN CHAMPIONS' CUP

Preliminary Round

Tourbillon (Chad) v Faca FC (CAR) 0-0, 1-1
AS Police (Mauritania) v AS Real Bamako (Mali) 1-1, 1-1
(Real won 5-4 on pens)
St Louis (Sey) v Young Africans (Tan) 1-3, 1-4
Sahel SC (Niger) v Postel Sport (Ben) 2-1, 2-1
LPRC Oilers (Lib) v Mighty Blackpool (SL) 1-0, 1-3
St George (Eth) v El Ittihad (Libya) 2-1, 0-3
Botswana Defence Force XI (Bot) v Mbabane Highlanders (Swa) 1-1, 0-1
Arsenal (Les) v Eleven Arrows (Nam) 3-0, 1-0
Port Autonome (Sen) v Sporting Club Praia (CVI) 0-0, 0-0
(Sporting won 3-1 on pens)
El Nguema (Eq. Guinea) v Primiero Agosto (Ang) 2-3, El Nguema withdrew from 2nd leg
(Primiero Agosto walkover)

First round

Tourbillon v El Hilal (Sud)
Sunrise FC (Mauritius) v AS Sotema (Mad)
AS Real Bamako v Wydad Casablanca (Mor)
Diables Noirs (Con) v Julius Berger (Nigeria)
Young Africans v Ismaila (Egy)
Sahel SC v Mouloudia Constantine (Alg)
Mighty Blackpool v Canon Yaounde (Cam)
El Ittihad v Gor Mahia (Ken)
Mbabane Highlanders v Nkana Red Devils (Zam)
Arsenal v Kampala City Council (Uga)
Sporting Club Praia v Club Africain (Tun, holders)
Primiero Agosto v AS Sogara (Gab)
Mikishi (Zai) v Ashante Kotoko (Gha)
Inter Star (Bur) v Costa do Sol (Moz)
Etoile Filante (B. Faso) v ASEC Abidjan (IC)
Horoya (Guinea) v Esperance (Tun)

Second round

Sunrise FC/AS Sotema v Tourvillon/El Hilal
Diables Noirs/Julius Berger v AS Real Bamako/Wydad Casabalanca
Sahel SC/Mouloudia Constantine v Young Africans/Ismaila
El Ittihad/Gor Mahia v Mighty Blackpool/ Canon Yaounde
Arsenal/Kampala City Council v Mbabane Highlanders/Nkana Red Devils
Primiero Agosto/AS Sogara v Sporting Club Praia/Club Africain
Inter Star/Costa do Sol v Mikishi/Ashante Kotoko
Horoya/Esperance v AEtoile Filante/ASEC Abidjan

Leading scorers

4 — Mounkaila (Sahel SC), **Mwamba** (Young Africans)
2 — Mohale (Arsenal), **Kipese** (Young Africans)

AFRICAN CUP-WINNERS' CUP

Preliminary round

DR Fatima (CAR) v Atletico Malabo (Eq. Guinea) 3-0, 1-1
Chief Santos (Nam) v Mochudi Centre Chiefs (Bot)
(Chief Santos withdrew, Mochudi walkover)
Denver Sundowns (Swa) v Club de Gaza (Moz) 5-3, 1-1
Railways SC (Tan) v Matlama (Les) 1-0, 0-1
(Railways won 3-2 on pens)
Mogas 90 FC (Ben) v Postel 2000 (Chad) 3-0, 0-2
Port Authority (SL) v Amicale des Douanes (Mauritania) 3-0, 0-1

First round

DR Fatima v Tonnerre Yaounde (Cam)
Elecsport (Con) v El Kanemi Warriors (Nigeria)
Mochudi Centre Chiefs v Power Dynamos (Zam, holders)
Vital '0 (Bur) v BTM (Mad)
AFC Leopards (Ken) v Al Ahly (Egy)
Denver Sundowns v Kabwe Warriors (Zam)
Al Merreikh (Sud) v Express FC (Uga)
Railways SC v Highlanders (Zim)
Diaraf Dakar (Sen) v ASFAG (Guinea)
Mogas 90 FC v ES Sahel (Tun)
AS Mande (Mali) v USM Bel Abbas (Alg)
Port Authority v Africa Sports (IC)
USM (Gab) v ASFA Yennega (B. Faso)
Olympics FC (Niger) v Ahly Benghazi (Lib)
Invincible XI (Lib) v Accra Great Olympics (Gha)
Petro Atletico (Ang) v CS Daring Motema Pembe (Zai)

Second round

Elecsport/El Kanemi Warriors v DR Fatima/ Tonnerre Yaounde
Vital 'O/BTM v Mochudi Centre Chiefs/Power Dynamos
Denver Sundowns/Kabwe Warriors v AFC Leopards/Al Ahly
Railways SC/Highlanders v Al Merreikh/ Express FC
Mogas 90 FC/ES Sahel v Diaraf Dakar/ASFAG
Port Authority/Africa Sports v AS Mande/USM Bel Abbas
Olympics FC/Ahly Benghazi v USM/ASFA Yennega
Petro Atletico/CS Daring Motema Pembe v Invincible XI/Accra Great Olympics

Leading scorers

3 — Dube (Denver Sundowns)
2 — Matondo (DR Fatima), **Coker** (Port Authority), **Mandlazi** (Denver Sundowns).

Wanted . . . Bari's David Platt.

Wanted . . . Genoa's Carlos Aguilera.

Wanted . . . Atalanta's Claudio Caniggia.

Europe

Foreign player market heats up

EVEN if inclement weather would suggest otherwise, feverish activity on the foreign player market is enough to remind us in Italy that spring is here.

The season of journalistic "fliers", player-promoting agents and market speculation is upon us.

This year, too, that season has been rendered all the more difficult to decipher because of the question mark surrounding precisely what rules and regulations will apply to the employment of foreigners for the 1992-93 season.

As we write, the Football Federation has yet to deliver its final verdict on the matter.

However, it is no secret that Federation President , Antonio Matarrese, favours a uniquely Italian solution whereby First Division clubs would be allowed to sign an unlimited number of foreigners, with the proviso that only three could be included in the Sunday team sheet of 16.

Matarrese, thanks to an understanding with the major clubs, is almost certain to get his way.

Those same major clubs have already based their market activity on the premise that they can use more than three foreigners.

Of the Italian based "stranieri", perhaps the two most contested players are Englishman David Platt of Bari and Uruguayan Daniel Fonseca of Cagliari. Italian clubs are never averse to hiring a foreigner who has already proven his worth in Italy.

Platt and Fonseca have outstanding credentials since both have continued to look useful players despite playing in two sides which have been involved in a relegation battle all season.

Not surprisingly, two clubs who have both got recent foreign purchases wrong, Juventus and Samdporia, are both interested in Platt and Fonseca.

Juventus, having "failed" with Rush, Zavarov, Aleinikov and Rui Barros in recent seasons, now appear inclined to offload Brazilian sweeper Julio Cesar to make way for Platt, Fonseca or indeed A.N.Other.

In contrast, German defenders, Stefan Reuter and Jurgen Kohler, both seem sure to stay with "La Signora".

FIAT President and Juventus patron, Gianni Agnelli, has already made public his enthusiasm for Platt, going out of his way to shake hands with the Englishman in the Stadio Delle Alpi dressing room in Turin, following a Torino versus Bari League game.

Agnelli going out of his way to shake hands with someone is only slightly less significant that being invited to tea by the Pope.

From the moment of the handshake, Platt was a Juventus player, in the eyes of many.

However, both Napoli and Sampdoria are allegedly on Platt's trail. Napoli would have no space problems since the former champions seem inclined to sell both Alemao and Laurent Blanc.

Napoli have put all their foreign player considerations temporarily on ice until they ascertain the intentions of an obscure Argentine called Maradona, D.A., who remains under contract to the club until June 1993.

Sampdoria, too, have serious interest in Platt.

The relative "failures" of foreign signings such as Mikhailichenko and Silas makes Sampdoria President Paolo Mantovani a cautious mover on the transfer market.

Sampdoria, too, should have room for Platt since both Silas and the remarkable 36-year-old Cerezo will probably be offloaded this summer.

While Platt himself remains diplomatically non-committal about his future, news of an alleged Sampdoria interest in Nottingham Forest defender Des Walker would add weight to Platt's candidacy since Italian clubs generally believe in the idea of employing foreigners of the same nationality.

It is worth bearing in mind, with regard to Platt, that his Bari contract allows him to leave the club in the event of their (now likely) relegation.

Fonseca of Cagliari is also sure to be on the move this summer, with three possible destinations being Juventus, Inter and Sampdoria.

Fonseca's compatriot, Carlos Aguilera of Genoa, is another hotly contested resident foreigner.

He is currently a bone of contention between Torino and pressure from the Genoa fans and club President Aldo Spinelli. Torino are favourites to win the tussle, signing Aguilera for around 2.5 million US dollars

Mentioned

Argentine striker Claudio Caniggia of Atalanta is yet another tried and true "straniero" who is regularily mentioned in Juventus and Internazionale dispatches.

Atalanta's purchase of Urugyan Pablo Montero, plus the imminent retirement of Glenn Stromberg, would suggest that the club intends to effect a "turnover" of foreigners.

Champions elect Milan look like they will have a very full foreign house with Savicevic (Red Star Belgrade), Boban (currently on loan to Bari) and perhaps Papin (Marseille) all joining the familiar names of Gullit, Van Basten and Rijkaard.

Neighbours and bitter local rivals Inter have uncertain future plans.

German defender Andreas Brehme will be encouraged to leave, perhaps for Athletic Bilbao in Spain where his compatriot Jupp Heynckes will be team coach next season.

Compatriot and striker Jurgen Klinsmann may go to Marseille to replace Papin or he may accept staying on as the "fourth" foreigner.

In the meantime, Inter have bought striker Darko Pancev from Red Star Belgrade while they are allegedly dealing with Barcelona for the Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov. All of which leaves unresolved their outstanding dilemma — namely, to retain or dispense with the services of the somewhat capricious but still highly effective Lothar Matthaus.

Inter's uncertainty about Matthaus is not helped by the tantilising possibility of replacing him with Foggia's Russian Igor Shalimov, arguably the outstanding creative midfielder in this season's Serie A.

All of which says nothing about Lazio and Mr. Paul Gascoigne.

The transfer season is only just warming up.

More next month.

SWITZERLAND BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Svab keeps calm

SWITZERLAND'S record champions (22 titles) and cup-winners (17 trophies), Zurich Grasshoppers, started the championship pool with four games without defeat, but slumped unexpectedly to a 3-0 home loss against lowly Young Boys.

Nonetheless, most experts are convinced that they will again win the title. Their Czechoslovak team manager, Oldrich Svab (above), 51, is the successor to the German Ottmar Hitzfeld, who left to manage Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga.

Svab knows the setup in Zurich having been for the past two years assistant coach. He has now been in this country for nearly 22 years and managed altogether seven clubs.

The feature of the present side is the large number of young talented players who are hungry for success. The "Hoppers" boast the youngest team in the First Division. Patrick de Napoli 16, Mario Cantaluppi 18, Giovanni Elber 19, Georgios Nemtsoudis 19 (below), Ramon Vega 21 and Ciriaco Sforza 22, who is already linked with Bayern Munich. They all had to fill in the gaps at one time or another when the club suffered a spate of injuries.

Business manager Erich Vogel claims that it is the personnel policy that keeps the club strong. "We have weeded out the trouble makers and the ruffians and there is now an atmosphere of calm within the club."

The "Hoppers" are still the role model for the rest with their youth development and education and are showing the way towards financial solvency. "Not many love us, but most envy our setup", reaffirms Vogel.

GERMANY BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

UNION IN A STRUGGLING STATE

THE announcement that the English "Professional Footballers Association" (PFA) was ready to call a strike of its members because their demands had not been met, was greeted in some quarters in Germany with disbelieving shaking of heads.

The general reaction was one of regret that the oldest, the biggest, best organised and most influential footballers' union in the world may not have solved its differences with the new "Premier League" by negotiations, but was willing to risk confrontation.

The German attitude was understandable for on the Continent there is little or no tradition of sporting unions in most countries.

In Germany the players union is still not fully recognised and it has little say in the way the game is run. In fact the initiative to form a footballers association was launched only six years ago by the former Werder Bremen captain Benno Mohlmann. The so-caled "Vereingung der Vertragsfussballspieler" (VdV) was founded in June 1987; it has 700 members out of the total 800 German professionals.

But this body is still fighting for acceptance by the DFB (FA). Mohlmann has suggested three dates for a meeting to thrash out a new transfer system. Now he admits sadly: "We have not heard from the DFB since November. As a last resort we will now approach the clubs individually."

But the DFB director Wilfried Straub reacts dismissively: "There is nothing to discuss".

"In Germany there is no climate for a strike by footballers", Mohlmann reflects ruefully: "The German public would not support us. They think we are all grossly overpaid."

The German players too want more money from television. But they will probably have to go cap in hand to the DFB and try to get an improved offer through protracted negotiations.

On the playing front the title race now features three candidates for the title, Borussia Dortmund, Eintracht Frankfurt and VfB Stuttgart.

Their hero is that lethal finisher Fritz Walter who is, as I write, the league's leading scorer with 16 goals. Dortmund's top marksman, the Swiss Stephane Chapuisat, also hit 16.

Kaiserslautern's defeat at Borussia Monchengladbach has probably put the holders out of contention.

The clash of the main contenoers Dortmund v Frankfurt before a capacity crowd of 52,616 in Dortmund ended in a 2-2 draw.

But following Dortmund's first setback after 19 games, at Nuremberg (1-2) the top trio were all level on points.

Meanwhile the crisis at Bayern Munich rumbled on, worsened by the 3-1 home defeat against Bavarian rivals Nurnburg, in front of an imposing audience of 55,000. It was Bayern's seventh setback in the Olympic stadium.

Expected

The managerial switch — Erich Ribbeck for Soren Lerby — has not brought the expected improvement. Lerby would have gone anyway in the summer because he hasn't got a German coaching licence.

Bayern had thus endured three managers in one season, but Ribbeck seems set to continue as a personal friend of vice-president Franz Beckenbauer.

Ribbeck has a great reputation and was successful in the Bundesliga with Rot-Weiss Essen when only 32. Subsequently he was in charge of Eintracht Frankfurt and Kaiserslautern.

Then he became assistant to national team manager Jupp Derwall (1978-83) and was regarded as his successor, but the DFB plumped for Beckenbauer.

Ribbeck's biggest success came in 1988 when with Bayer Leverkusen he won the UEFA Cup.

Following a spell at Hamburg SV he was for some years representative of the current Bayern sponsor, the car makers Opel.

The Cup semi-finals were both decided on penalty shoot-outs. It was really a tale of two goalkeepers.

Borussia Monchengladbach's Uwe Kamps saved four penalties and as his team-mates missed a couple. Borussia beat Bayer Leverkusen 2-0 on spot kicks.

Second Division Hannover's 'keeper Jorg Sievers converted a penalty against holders Werder Bremen!

The final between Borussia Monchengladbach and Hannover 96 will take place in Berlin on 23 May.

Leading scorer . . . Stuttgart's Walter.

UKRAINE BY VICTOR GUSEV

Looking for an acceptable name

WHAT NAME will be used for the country succeeding the former Soviet Union in future international competitions?

"Russia, of course," says Viacheslav Koloskov, president of the CIS Federation and a vice-president of FIFA. "I don't think the Ukrainians would object."

They might, though. Of the 38 players who represented the Soviet Union in the last three World Cup tournaments, only 14 came from Russia, the biggest of the Soviet Union's republics, compared with 16 Ukrainians.

The problem of a title is complicated by the fact that Victor Bannikov, president of the Ukranian Federation, has broken off all relations with the CIS Federation — an agreement reached only last December.

Both sides blame each other for not observing the rules, particularly with regard to transfers, and the CISFF have now imposed a one-year ban on any player who leaves his club to join one in Ukraine without consent.

Koloskov says: "There are now more than 30 Russian players illegally playing for Ukrainian teams, and we have to do something about it."

Bannikov replies: "We abide by FIFA regulations only, and there has never been a case of violating them on our side."

This will not mean the withdrawal of Alexei Mikhailichenko, Sergei Yuran (right) and Andrei Kanchelskis from the team in the forthcoming European Championship.

Bannikov will keep his promise to allow their release to compete in Sweden, no matter what name is adopted for the team. But the Ukranian FF might need further guarantees that their interests will be observed once the team disband after the Championship.

Nobody should be made "hostage" to Ukraine's World Cup ambitions, but the Republic have a right to win a qualifying place for US '94 by beating Russia, Byleorussia and Georgia, if they can.

A fair qualification tournament is a good alternative to what might happen if the choice is made anywhere other than on the pitch.

Valeri Lobanovski, former Soviet national coach, has given his "preliminary consent" to becoming Ukrainian national coach.

He has been working with the national squad in the United Arab Emirates.

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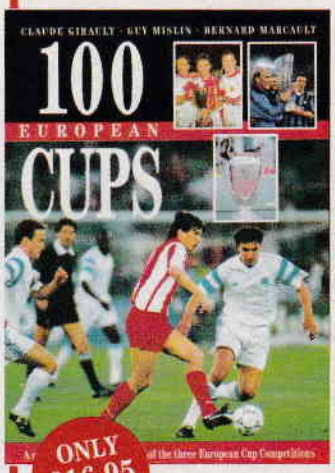

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SPAIN BY GRAHAM TURNER

The Real world

'PACHO' FIRED AND TOSHACK BARRED

SPANISH football continued its love-hate relationship with foreign coaches by firing Francisco Maturana and hiring Jupp Heynckes within 24 hours.

Colombian Maturana (above right) has reason to feel bitter about his dismissal after 20 months and 67 League games working with limited material at Real Valladolid. Although he accepted the board's decision with his usual elegance, "Pacho" was hurt by a number of directors he said, who acted like snipers.

"First they picked off Higuita, Valderrama and Alvarez, and then they went for me. What they did with Higuita was criminal.

"In Colombia he was a superstar with a big house in the best part of town and three big cars in the garage. The Valladolid directors could give him nothing better than an apartment at the butt-end of town and a Seat Ibiza. He was treated like a nobody and he played like a nobody."

The Christmas departures of all three Colombians left Maturana short of creative talent. When he was sacked, Valladolid were in the relegation play-off zone and only La Coruna and Mallorca had scored fewer than his side's 25 goals in 29 games.

Ironic when you think that if Raddy Antic had not taken 17 points out of 18 at the end of last season, Maturana would have started the 1991-92 campaign at Real Madrid.

Volumes

Offers within a matter of hours from Oviedo, Gijon, Burgos and Millonarios of Bogota speak volumes for the respect "Pacho" has gained, not only for his work with the Colombian national team but also for the tactical innovations he introduced at Valladolid.

His dismissal speaks volumes about the state of the club. The board voted 10-2 to show him the red card, whereupon the president, Andres Martin, resigned. When the board refused to accept it, he walked out.

Club stalwart Jose More then refused to step into Maturana's shoes and the job has now gone to Javier Yepes, a coach whose only experience is with the reserve team. Now may be the time to bet on Valladolid's starting next season in Division Two.

The same nightmare has been troubling the sleep of the wicked in Bilbao, where Athletic, with leaden feet, have been fleeting from the spectre of relegation for the first time in 64 years.

Regular readers may recall that the Basque crisis is hardly recent news. Howard Kendall was the last coach to take the Lions into Europe, in 1988, and he left perplexed and exasperated by a side who played with heads high and fists clenched at San Mames but looked hunchbacked and limp-wristed away from home.

Since then, Athletic have exhausted their supply of home-grown coaches, such as Javier Clemente, Inaki Saez, Jose Angel Iribar and, now Jesus Aranguren, without finding solutions. So the Lions have bounded over the Pyrenees again and pounced on Jupp Heynckes.

Despite being sacked by Bayern Munich last October, he is held in high esteem by fellow coaches in Germany and elsewhere. His good friend Johan Cruyff urged him to take the job.

Real Sociedad's John Toshack, who will become his Basque enemy no. 1, claims a friendship based on epic encounters between Liverpool and Borussia Monchengladbach, and the Heynckes Admiration Society is so numerous that one Spanish paper was moved to ask if there is any coach, anywhere in the world, prepared to say a word against him.

Heynckes, 47 this month, will take over at San Mames with five months in which to observe and correct before the kick-off on September 6.

The Basque job will be a stern test. During seven seasons at Borussia and four at Bayern Heynckes established himself as a studious, hard-working and competent coach, but his recent predecessors at Bilbao all had similar credentials, and failed.

His first declaration of intent has been that of erasing the British trademarks traditionally stamped on Athletic's football.

Kendall . . . exasperated by Bilbao's poor form away from San Mames.

"I'm going to make radical changes to this mentality," he promises. "I'm going to work hard to build a new Bilbao, one you won't recognise — a team with a winning philosophy."

His remarks about mentality and philosophy are very much to the point. The club's crisis has penetrated so deeply into the Basque psyche that Toshack has been declared persona non grata by the Bilbao board for some typically blunt comments before the derby against Real Sociedad.

The current Bilbao manager, Jesus Aranguren, accused Real of "ill-treating" Athletic when they went to play in San Sebastian.

Toshack pointed out that while Athletic dressed themselves in the romantic mantle of flag-bearers for Basque youth policies, they had in fact spent the best part of £4m on Loren, Billabona, Ciganda and Ripodas, none of whom have set San Mames on fire. They sold the image of "a serious club" but have had more managers in 12 months than Real Sociedad have had in eight years.

The Bilbao board reacted by prohibiting all club employees from attending functions where Tosh is on the guest list. The truth hurts.

On the pitch, the problems start between the posts. Despite the daily attentions of Jose Angel Iribar in the training complex at Lezama, neither Iru nor Kike has been able to live up to the traditions of Basque goalkeeping.

Central defender Asier has been hurriedly taken on loan from Real Madrid and switched to right-back.

Vision

The midfield lacks vision. And nobody has solved the conundrum of putting heart into the Lions away from home.

In the meantime, Spanish clubs are making varied progress towards selling enough shares to meet the mandatory requirements of becoming limited companies by the end of the season.

Real Sociedad, aided by an excellent publicity leaflet endorsed by Toshack, sold so many shares in a matter of weeks that almost the whole of their £2.7m share capital has been covered.

By contrast, bottom-of-the-table Mallorca are nowhere near their £4.5m target, and relegation could drive a lot of nails into their coffin. Ditto Second Division Santander, who have sold only 10 per cent of their shares, and Celta of Vigo, required to sell shares worth £4.4m, insist that promotion is their only route to salvation.

Watch this space for further reports of financial mayhem.

A DIFFERENT BALL GAME

ACTION on the pitch is exciting and uncertain. The battles for the title, European places and survival are so closely fought that all clubs in the League have something to play for, and many issues could go the distance until June 7.

At that point, Barcelona and Bulgaria striker Hristo Stoichkov is expected to make an announcement about his future. Like fellow strikers Gary Lineker and Julio Salinas, he has been in and out of the team and banished either to the wings or the bench.

Inter Milan are favourites to beat Marseille, Roma and Paris St. Germain in bidding likely to reach £6.5m. Barcelona are offering to revise his contract dramatically upwards in a bid to retain him.

All of which is better than a kick in the privates, as Atletico Madrid goalkeeper Abel Resino can testify. In training a free-kick from Bernd Schuster exploded through his defences and inflicted severe damage on his jock-strap. Result: a minor operation and a month out of action.

As Jupp Heynckes may discover, Spanish football is a different ball game

PORTUGAL BY ALBERTO DA SILVA

FC PORTO CHAMPIONS!

A fine 3-2 victory over Benfica at Estadio da Luz, ensured FC Porto of the Portuguese Championship.

With players like Joao Pinto, Rui Filipe, Kostadinov and Domingos performing consistently well, the new champions were the best team throughout the season and fully deserved their triumph.

New president—and managers

BENFICA have elected a new President.

He is, Mr Jorge de Brito a banker, who has been involved with the management of the club for many years. Now as supremo he wants to make Benfica one of Europe's greatest and most successful clubs again.

Mr Brito's first task is to replace manager Eriksson.

Even with Brito's millions the new man faces a hard task.

Former England boss, Bobby Robson is the new manager of Sporting Lisbon.

Sporting Lisbon have had a tradition of English managers since the days of Galloway. They had Malcolm Allison, John Toshack, Keith Burkinshaw and Jimmy Hagan in the last ten years.

Now seeking a new period of glory and success President Mr. Sousa Cintra wanted another British manager. Steve Coppel, Howard Kendall and Kenny Dalglish, were among those mentioned.

In the event, Sousa Cintra, the Portuguese King of mineral water, picked Bobby Robson. As PSV Manager, Robson could never learn Dutch. Will he learn Portuguese? The financial aspects of the two year contract are said to be substantial.

HUNGARY BY BRIAN O'SULLIVAN

Detari's fitness battle

LAJOS DETARI, whose midfield skills gave England some scares in the scoreless draw in Budapest four years ago, hopes to be fit for the same fixture in Budapest on May 12.

The Bologna playmaker, was thought to have needed a month to recover from a groin injury, thus sidelining him until May 3 and keeping him out of the hastily-arranged match against Hungary's revived neighbours, Ukraine, at Uzgorod, on April 29.

Detari, together with Jozsef Kipnich and Kalman Kovacs, the two forwards, formed an impressive attacking triangle in the 2-1 win over Austria in late March (above right) when Emerich Jenei and Ernst Happel, the Austrian manager, were having their first matches in charge.

Hungary, playing with a libero and two man-marking centre-backs

YUGOSLAVIA BY TIM COLLINGS

Some consolation for Red Star

RED STAR'S hopes of defending the Champions' Cup at Wembley almost certainly died when the team were beaten 3-1 by Sampdoria in Sofia.

But they proved they are determined to hang on to the Yugoslav title by opening a five-point gap at the top with a 3-1 win over Sarajevo.

Victory

Darko Pancev (right), leading League scorer with 23 goals after 26 games, maintained his reputation as one of Europe's most dangerous strikers by cracking a hat-trick.

The victory went some way towards ensuring that the disappointment against Sampdoria was not the end of the Red Star season . . . but it could not disguise the fact that the Yugoslavs' battle to overcome all obstacles had been lost at last.

Not even the travelling support provided by 30,000 Serbs, many of whom had driven in convoy from Belgrade, could lift Red Star.

But the title now looks certain to be Red Star's for the third successive season — quite an achievement, even though the competition is nothing like as strong this year as in the past, because of the continuing unrest.

TURKEY BY HASAN CEMALI

Milne goes for the hat-trick

BESIKTAS, under Gordon Milne are on course for a hat-trick of championships, having won the title in each of the last two seasons.

In a vital Istanbul derby, injury-hit Besiktas beat Fenerbahce with an 89th minute Zeki Sole goal. Besiktas lead the League with 63 points. Fenerbahce are seven points beyond, with a game in hand.

In another vital league game, Galatasaray defeated Trabzonspor 3-2 in Ankara to move into third place with 54 points. Trabzonspor, whose ground was closed for two games, had to play this gamea in Ankara — due to incidents in their home match with Fenerbahce.

In front of 18,927 both teams played spectacular football.

League top scorer is Hami of Trabzonspor with 18 goals.

GREECE BY LOU ECONOMOPOULOS

VASILIS IN SCORING VEIN

THREE goals by Vasilis Dimitriadis lifted him to joint top of the Greek First Division scorers list and his AEK team to the top of the table, beating Panachaiki 5-1.

Dimitriadis now has 18 goals, and is level with Dimitris Saravakos of Panathinaikos (above). AEK are top with 41 points, one ahead of Panathinaikos and Olympiakos.

Panathinaikos beat OFI Crete 2-0, despite losing goalkeeper Josef Vancek before the match. A coin thrown by a sling-shot hit him on the head and left him needing three stitches. Olympiakos routed Panionios 4-1, with two goals by Yiotis Tsalouhidis, which took his tally to 16.

AEK coach Dusan Bayevich says teamwork is the key to the success of his team.

"Every player knows that only teamwork will bring the championship. This season the top three teams all have equal chances of taking the title. I don't remember such a situation before," Bayevich said.

AEK are still in the running for the League Cup as well, joining Olympiakos, PAOK and Atromitos Athens in the semi-finals.

Players of Second Division Haravgiakos found a unique way to protest against referee Yannis Koufopoulos in their home match against Panargiakos, which they lost 3-0.

After Koufopoulos sent off two players and gave three yellow cards, the rest of the Haravgiakos players kicked the ball out every time it reached them. Koufopoulos answered back by ending the match three minutes early.

behind a five-strong midfield line, recovered from conceding the first goal. Detari and Kovacs scoring in the second half. Jenei expressed satisfaction with the play of the Hungarians and the influence of the foreign-based players.

While the tactical formation will be the same against England there will be a more restraining strategy in the midfield without the necessarily defensive mode that the Hungarians, when without four first-choice players, fell into at Wembley in September, 1990.

That was only the second full international for the goalkeeper, Zsolt Petry, now one of Europe's best. Even then he drew unstinting priase from Graham Taylor, the England manager, in keeping the defeat to only 1-0.

Laszlo Disztl, the sweeper, is injured and so Gabor Marton, whose ankle injury prevented him playing against Austria, will probably fulfil that role. The Kispest-Honved player, has more creative ability than Andras Telek who, nonetheless, made a reasonable debut against the Austrians.

Versatile

Ervin Kovacs, the tall Kispest defender, and Emil Lorincz, of Belgium's RWD Molenbeek, are the two centre-backs behind the midfield line. Here, Ferencvaros supply two players who are full-backs with their clubs, Tibor Simon and Jozsef Keller.

In between them will be Detari, Peter Lipcsei, also of Fradi, and one from Istvan Kozma, who was settling in at Liverpool at the time of the Austrian match, Tamas Monos, of FC Liege, required by his club then, and Tibor Nagy, a versatile defender.

The semi-finals of the Cup will be all-First Division affairs, Vac v MTK-VM and Kispest v UTE, on April 15 and 22.

Little-known Bag, winners of the Matra group in the Third Division last season, managed a scoreless draw at home to UTE in the quarter-finals only for Denes Eszenyi to score four goals in a 5-0 second-leg romp.

MTK surprised Siofok, winning 3-1 after Attila Kaman, Zoltan Kolovics and Jozsef Duro were sent off in the last 17 minutes. The second-leg score was 3-1, too.

Vac overcame Nagykanizsa only 1-0 in the first leg. Ferenc Orosz scoring, and won 2-1 at home while, in the other tie, Istvan Vincze got the only goal in the first, away, leg for Kispest against Gyori Raba who lost 2-1 in the return.

Vasily (Laszlo) Racz scored "my first real goal" for Ferencvaros in the 7-0 thrashing of bottom team Zalaegerszeg who had still to win a league game after 20 attempts.

The former Soviet international had previously scored for the green-and-whites only once, in a charity game in Kiev.

Kispest, with 28 points from 20 games, lead Vac by a point and goal difference while Ferencvaros and Siofok are a point behind.

LIKELY HUNGARY SQUAD FOR ENGLAND FRIENDLY

Player	Pos	Club	Age	Caps	Goals
PETRY	G	Gent	25	16	—
BROCKHAUSER	G	UTE	30	5	—
MARTON	SW	Kispest	25	1	—
TELEK	SW	Ferencvaros	21	1	—
LORINCZ	CB	Molenbeek	26	13	2
KOVACS	CB	Kispest	25	18	1
SIMON	RB	Ferencvaros	26	6	—
KELLER	LB	Ferencvaros	24	21	—
LIPCSEI	M	Ferencvaros	20	7	—
DETARI	M	Bologna	29	48	11
BALOG	M	MTK—VM	27	12	1
KOZMA	M	Liverpool	27	29	1
MONOS	M	FC Liege	24	17	—
NAGY	M	Vac	29	7	—
ESZENYI	F	UTE	24	7	—
KIPRICH	F	Feyenoord	28	50	20
KOVACS	F	Kispest	26	42	13
VINCZE	F	Kispest	25	22	5
ILLES	F	Haladas	24	4	—
FISCHER	F	Siofok	26	18	—

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SWEDISH FIXTURES

12 APRIL
GAIS v Orebro
Djurgardens v Trelleborg
Vastra v Gothenburg
Malmo v Osters
Norrkoping v AIK

16 APRIL
Malmo v Orebro
Norrkoping v Trelleborg
AIK v Gothenburg
GAIS v Osters
Vastra v Djurgardens

20 APRIL
Gothenburg v Norrkoping
Trelleborg v Malmo
Orebro v Vastra
Djurgardens v GAIS
Osters v AIK

26 APRIL
Gothenburg v Djurgardens
Trelleborg v Orebro
Norrkoping v GAIS
AIK v Malmo
Osters v Vastra

4 MAY
Orebro v Gothenburg
Djurgardens v Osters
Vastra v Trelleborg
Malmo v Norrkoping
GAIS v AIK

11 MAY
Gothenburg v Trelleborg
Malmo v GAIS
Norrkoping v Vastra
Osters v Orebro
AIK v Djurgardens

14 MAY
Vastra v Malmo
Gothenburg v GAIS
Trelleborg v Osters
Orebro v AIK
Djurgardens v Norrkoping

17 MAY
Malmo v Djurgardens
Norrkoping v Orebro
AIK v Trelleborg
Osters v Gothenburg
Djurgardens v Vastra

24 MAY
Djurgardens v AIK
GAIS v Malmo
Trelleborg v Gothenburg
Orebro v Osters
Vastra v Norrkoping

31 MAY
Gothenburg v Vastra
Trelleborg v Djurgardens
Orebro v GAIS
Osters v Malmo
AIK v Norrkoping

29 JUNE
GAIS v Trelleborg
Djurgardens v Orebro
Vastra v AIK
Malmo v Gothenburg
Norrkoping v Osters

2 JULY
Malmo v Vastra
Norrkoping v Djurgardens
AIK v Orebro
Osters v Trelleborg
GAIS v Gothenburg

5 JULY
Gothenburg v Osters
Trelleborg v AIK
Orebro v Norrkoping
Djurgardens v Malmo
Vastra v GAIS

9 JULY
Vastra v Orebro
Malmo v Trelleborg
Norrkoping v Gothenburg
AIK v Osters
GAIS v Djurgardens

12 JULY
Gothenburg v AIK
Trelleborg v Norrkoping
Orebro v Malmo
Djurgardens v Vastra
Osters v GAIS

16 JULY
Norrkoping v Orebro
Trelleborg v Vastra
Gothenburg v Malmo
AIK v GAIS
Osters v Djurgardens

19 JULY
Orebro v Trelleborg
Djurgardens v Gothenburg
Vastra v Osters
Malmo v AIK
GAIS v Norrkoping

ROMANIA BY BOB VAUGHAN

A NAME TO WATCH - 'E'

A FEATURE of the spring half of the championship season, which Dinamo lead by eight points from disappointing Steaua, was the Craiova derby match — not one of Europe's best-known.

This is "U" versus "E" or Universitatea against Electroputere or former champions versus the newly-promoted.

All credit to "E", just up from the Second Division, in reaching fifth in the League, a point behind The Students.

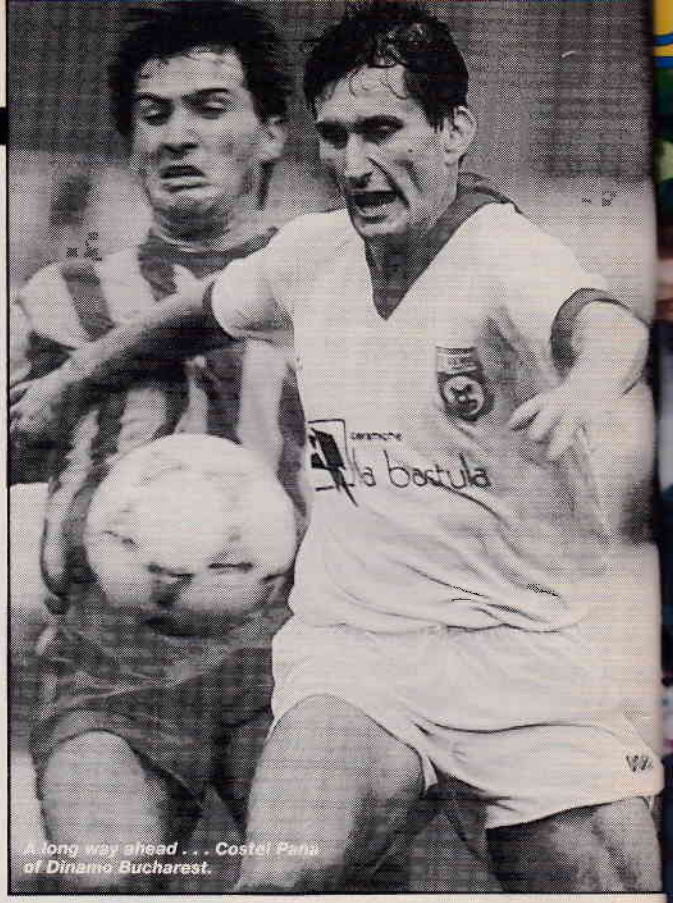
Ciurea, one of the smallest players in the First Division, scored for "U" before an Electroputere break gave Mitrita the chance to equalise with a powerful shot.

A revived Petrolul stand third, despite only drawing 0-0 with lowly Sportul, while the two Craiova clubs also challenge for the three UEFA Cup places.

In the Cup the talk is of Third Division Dunarea Calarasi, who put out Poli Timisoara to enter the quarter-finals. Will goalscorer Farin strike again?

The national team won 2-0 in a friendly with Latvia, making their first appearance in an "A" game outside the Baltic for over 50 years. Whether either party learned much to help with World Cup preparations seemed doubtful.

Romania begin with visits from the Faroes and Wales. Four points on the board before Brussels in the autumn could have newly-appointed coach Dinu looking ahead to the US.



A long way ahead . . . Costel Pana of Dinamo Bucharest.

BULGARIA

CSKA hold narrow lead

FURTHER discussions about the future professional league were the background as the championship spring half continued, with CSKA leading but only by a point.

Levski could have overtaken them but could only draw with Hebar, who are almost certain to go down with Miner.

Their goalless home draw with Dobrudja left the bottom three cut off with just over a quarter of the programme still to play.

CSKA are the likely tip for the title but the stumble at Hebar, after putting five past Lok Go, gives Levski some hope.

The two Plovdiv clubs are probably now too far behind to mount a real challenge but Botev seem to carry greater weight up front and could just sneak a UEFA Cup place.

NORWEGIAN FIXTURES

26 APRIL
Ham-Kam v Brann
Lillestrom v Viking
Mjondalen v Kongsvinger
Molde v Tromso
Rosenborg v Lyn
Start v Sogndal

3 MAY
Brann v Lillestrom
Kongsvinger v Ham-Kam
Lyn v Mjondalen
Sogndal v Molde
Tromso v Rosenborg
Viking v Start

10 MAY
Ham-Kam v Lyn
Lillestrom v Kongsvinger
Mjondalen v Tromso
Rosenborg v Molde
Sogndal v Viking
Start v Brann

16 MAY
Brann v Viking
Kongsvinger v Start
Lyn v Lillestrom
Molde v Mjondalen
Rosenborg v Sogndal
Tromso v Ham-Kam

24 MAY
Ham-Kam v Molde
Lillestrom v Tromso
Mjondalen v Rosenborg
Sogndal v Brann
Start v Lyn
Viking v Kongsvinger

31 MAY
Kongsvinger v Brann
Lyn v Viking
Mjondalen v Sogndal
Molde v Lillestrom
Rosenborg v Ham-Kam
Tromso v Start

8 JUNE
Brann v Lyn
Ham-Kam v Mjondalen
Kongsvinger v Sogndal
Lillestrom v Rosenborg
Start v Molde
Viking v Tromso

14 JUNE
Lyn v Kongsvinger
Mjondalen v Lillestrom
Molde v Viking
Rosenborg v Start
Sogndal v Ham-Kam
Tromso v Brann

21 JUNE
Brann v Molde
Kongsvinger v Tromso
Lillestrom v Ham-Kam
Sogndal v Lyn
Start v Mjondalen
Viking v Rosenborg

28 JUNE
Ham-Kam v Start
Lillestrom v Sogndal
Mjondalen v Viking
Molde v Kongsvinger
Rosenborg v Brann
Tromso v Lyn

5 JULY
Brann v Mjondalen
Kongsvinger v Rosenborg
Lyn v Molde
Sogndal v Tromso
Start v Lillestrom
Viking v Ham-Kam

19 JULY
Brann v Ham-Kam
Kongsvinger v Mjondalen
Lyn v Rosenborg
Sogndal v Start
Tromso v Molde
Viking v Lillestrom

26 JULY
Ham-Kam v Kongsvinger
Lillestrom v Brann
Mjondalen v Lyn
Molde v Sogndal
Rosenborg v Tromso
Start v Viking

9 AUGUST
Brann v Start
Kongsvinger v Lillestrom
Lyn v Ham-Kam
Molde v Rosenborg
Tromso v Mjondalen
Viking v Sogndal

16 AUGUST
Ham-Kam v Tromso
Lillestrom v Lyn
Mjondalen v Molde
Sogndal v Rosenborg
Start v Kongsvinger
Viking v Brann

23 AUGUST
Brann v Sogndal
Kongsvinger v Viking
Lyn v Start
Molde v Ham-Kam
Rosenborg v Mjondalen
Tromso v Lillestrom

30 AUGUST
Brann v Kongsvinger
Ham-Kam v Rosenborg
Lillestrom v Molde
Sogndal v Mjondalen
Start v Tromso
Viking v Lyn

13 SEPTEMBER
Lyn v Brann
Mjondalen v Ham-Kam
Molde v Start
Rosenborg v Lillestrom
Sogndal v Kongsvinger
Tromso v Viking

20 SEPTEMBER
Brann v Tromso
Ham-Kam v Sogndal
Kongsvinger v Lyn
Lillestrom v Mjondalen
Start v Rosenborg
Viking v Molde

27 SEPTEMBER
Ham-Kam v Lillestrom
Lyn v Sogndal
Mjodalen v Start
Molde v Brann
Rosenborg v Viking
Tromso v Kongsvinger

4 OCTOBER
Brann v Rosenborg
Kongsvinger v Molde
Lyn v Tromso
Sogndal v Lillestrom
Start v Ham-Kam
Viking v Mjondalen

18 OCTOBER
Ham-Kam v Viking
Lillestrom v Start
Mjodalen v Brann
Molde v Lyn
Rosenborg v Kongsvinger
Tromso v Sogndal

A good beginning . . . Horst Hrubesch of FC Tirol.

POLAND BY BOB VAUGHAN

LECH LOOK SET TO TAKE TITLE

LECH POZNAN'S victory over Slask Wroclaw with just over half the championship games played should have put the leaders on course for the fourth title in their history.

Trzeciak's two goals were enough to take the points from the Silesians, who are modestly placed in mid-table.

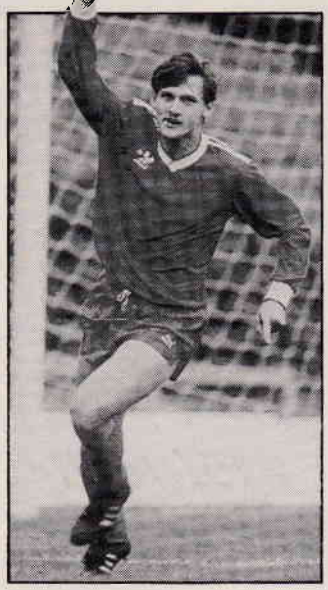
Meanwhile Katowice did not enhance their chances of catching Lech, despite being largely the better team at Stalowa Wola. Counter attacks were the home team's sole weapon, but were enough for the only goal of the game, slotted past Jojko by Sajdak.

Gornik made up two points by winning at Lubin but the fireworks were at Chorzow, where the "Silesian Lech" put five past bemused Motor Lublin.

On the international stage a game has been arranged with Austria, a rare opponent for the Poles, in Vienna, but how many foreign-based players will be available?

At least the latest trial, with Lithuania in Rydultowy, was won. A largely untried side against visitors playing their first full international for over half a century attracted only 1,000 spectators.

Managers Cmikiewicz and Lubinskas changed half their teams in a test in which goals by Kraus (4) and Lesiak (43) sufficed.



Making up ground . . . Gornik Zabrze's Andrzej Orzeszek.

AUSTRIA BY ARTHUR ROTMIL

Promising start for Hrubesch

A BRAVE start by Horst Hrubesch, the successor to Ernst Happel, as team manager of FC Tirol was spoiled in the third match of the championship play-off phase.

Following splendid wins over league leaders Austria Salzburg — their first defeat at home — and the champions FK Austria, the Innsbrucker slumped to a 2-0 defeat against the outsiders Vorwarts Steyr .

As a contributory factor they pointed to the loss of defenders Streiter and Wazinger, who collided. Both had to leave the field with concussion.

Tirol seemed to have overcome the loss of the Argentine playmaker Nestor Gorosito who returned home, but this was their first ever defeat by unfashionable Steyr.

Nonetheless Happel, now the Austrian national team manager, is full of praise for his former assistant: "Hrubesch will make it, of that I am certain."

Hrubesch, a former West Germany international striker, is hoping to make a name for himself in Austria and then return to the Bundesliga to take up a far more lucrative post.

Undercover

Austria Salzburg, so dominant in the autumn, lost for the third time in a row when they fell to Rapid Vienna for whom the new Russian "legionnaire" Alexander Soltitzk scored both goals in the 2-0 success.

Rapid got a shock when their bank manager, Michael Margules, was arrested in America. The financier, who launched the club's share floatation on the market, apparently received 60,000 dollars from an undercover agent of the FBI. The money came from drug trafficking and was to have been "laundered" through a bank in Vienna.

But instead of paying it in, Margules used the cash as a signing-on fee to hire the Argentinian striker Adrian Carlos Czornomaz from San Lorenzo for £400,000.

Czornomaz failed miserably in Vienna and has been dubbed by Rapid fans "the snail", because he is so slow. Meanwhile Rapid's shares, which sold for 1000 schillings (£50) each, have dropped dramatically on the Stock Exchange to 570 schillings (£28).

Consolation for Rapid — they beat FK Austria in the 188th Viennese "derby" and took over at the top on goal difference.

Out of Europe . . . Sparta's Novotny (foreground) stops Bakero, but Barcelona went on to qualify.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY BOB VAUGHAN

Sparta rue missed chance

APRIL brought an end to a spirited Czech challenge in the European Cups, but Sparta had the satisfaction of a home victory over Barcelona and had stayed in with an outside chance until losing 1-0 to Dynamo in Kiev.

The draw that might have been obtained in Spain in the opening series proved critical, and now Sparta have to concentrate on trying to qualify for Europe next season.

A home 3-0 victory over a very poor Trnava side before the "A" and "B" internationals with England nevertheless meant a seven-point deficit, though Slovan only managed a point at Bohemians.

A difficult game at Cheb, disputing the second relegation spot with Dynamo Ceske Budejovice, was also won, through goals by Vrabec and Sie. But Slovan, in front of 10,103 spectators, also took two points against modest Banska Bystrica.

Dubovsky was unable to add to his 21 goals this season and it was left to substitute Juriga to net the winner.

Understandable

In the circumstances it is surprising that the leading scorers, Slavia, are only fifth, but they have to play on Bohemians ground while "Eden" is reconstructed, so it is perhaps understandable that home form is unpredictable.

On the international front, the tests with England and Germany gave national team manager Macala tough opponents with which to experiment. Chovanec's recall as libero looks likely to be the basis of the defensive formula for the World Cup qualifying group, where Romania, Wales and Belgium have to be faced, as well as Cyprus and the Faroe Islands.

A tricky question is that of venues, given the present mood in the country. At least two games are likely to be in Prague but the Slovaks will expect to host two as well, so perhaps the refurbished All Sports Stadium in Kosice, near the Ukrainian border, will be visited by Wales or Belgium.

On the other hand, the national team have rarely lost a competitive game in Bratislava. Brno could be a candidate, too. As in Kosice, there is a football revival under way there, with the local side hopeful of returning to the top flight this autumn.

CZECH FIXTURES UPDATE

3 May
Cheb v Dukla
Trnava v Vitkovice
Slavia v C. Budejovice
Inter v Hradec
DAC v Slovan
Sparta v Bohemians
Presov v B. Bystrica
Ostrava v Olomouc

8 May
Dukla v Ostrava
Olomouc v Presov
B. Bystrica v Sparta
Bohemians v DAC
Slovan v Inter
Hradec v Slavia
C. Budejovice v Trnava
Vitkovice v Cheb

17 May
Vitkovice v Dukla
Cheb v C. Budejovice
Trnava v Hradec
Slavia v Slovan
Inter v Bohemians
DAC v B. Bystrica
Sparta v Olomouc
Presov v Ostrava

24 May
Dukla v Presov
Ostrava v Sparta
Olomouc v DAC
B. Bystrica v Inter
Bohemians v Slavia
Slovan v Trnava
Hr. Kralove v Cheb
C. Budejovice v Vitkovice

31 May
C. Budejovice v Dukla
Vitkovice v Hradec
Cheb v Slovan
Trnava v Bohemians
Slavia v B. Bystrica
Inter v Olomouc
DAC v Ostrava
Sparta v Presov

3 June
Dukla v Sparta
Presov v DAC
Ostrava v Inter
Olomouc v Slavia
B. Bystrica v Trnava
Bohemians v Cheb
Slovan v Vitkovice
Hradec v C. Budejovice

HOLLAND BY SIMON KUPER

POOR PSV WIN AGAIN

PSV are about to win the Championship for the sixth time in seven seasons, but the rest of Holland will remember this season chiefly for success abroad.

This has been the best Dutch year since 1988. The national team, with some luck, qualified for the European Championship, Ajax and Feyenoord have reached European finals, the Olympic football team may yet qualify for Barcelona, and Milan and their Dutchmen are on the point of winning the Italian Championship.

Poor PSV have seen their success overshadowed. Their manager, Bobby Robson, took months to return to action after his operation this winter, and has since signed for Sporting Lisbon, where he will start next season.

Frank Arnesen, his Danish assistant, took over while Robson was away, and at 35 has won his first managerial prize. Arnesen (right) is immensely popular with his players and once he gains his coaching diploma he should have a great career.

For the second year in a row, PSV failed to sort out an organised team, and they owe their title to individual brilliance.

Hans Van Breukelen in goal, Gica Popescu in defence, Wim Kieft in attack, and Gerald Vanenburg and Romario, on the few occasions they played, are all too good for the Dutch League.

But other PSV players disappointed, and general manager Kees Ploegsma has promised that some will be kicked out. Eric Gerets, the Belgian veteran, is retiring to manage FC Liege, while Robson is trying to sign defender Stans Valckx for Sporting.

PSV will not be able to spend big money unless they sell Gerald Vanenburg. He feels he is too little respected in Holland, and AS Roma and Internazionale are said to be interested.

Vanenburg has a contract that binds him to PSV for life, and the club would hate to lose him, but he seems determined to go. PSV have approached Feyenoord's midfielder Peter Bosz, but no Dutchman could replace Vanenburg.

Feyenoord challenged PSV for the title until mid-March, then fell away. They lost at home to MVV Maastricht and away to PSV and Groningen, mainly because their interests in the Dutch Cup and the Cup-winners' Cup distracted them.

In the semi-final of the Dutch Cup, Feyenoord needed penalties to beat another Rotterdam club, Sparta, after a 1-1 draw. Roda Kerkrade beat Telstar 3-0 in the other semi-final.

Ajax are finishing strongly, and three players in particular will remember this year happily.

Defender Sonny Silooy has a chance of regaining a place in the Dutch national team at last, now that he is back to his form of 1987. Silooy has 22 caps, his last more than three years ago.

Wim Jonk has developed into Ajax's playmaker. Manager Louis Van Gaal took a public risk earlier this season when he moved veteran Jan Wouters to left-half to make way for Jonk (left) in central midfield — especially when a disappointed Wouters deserted to Bayern Munich soon after the switch.

Yet Jonk has proved Van Gaal right, his precise long passes feeding Dennis Bergkamp with goal after goal.

Jonk, now 25, will be hoping for an international debut soon. Next to him, Michel Kreek has won the left-half position.

He used to be derided by the fans, his poor technique standing out in such a gifted side, but he has shown that intelligence and hard work are crucial virtues.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND BY SEAN CREEDON

O'LEARY CHASES BRADY'S RECORD

AFTER setting a new record of 700 first team appearances for Arsenal Dave O'Leary's next target is Liam Brady's Republic of Ireland record of 72 caps.

At present Dave (right), who will be 34 this month, has 63 caps and if he stays free of injury and in Jack Charlton's plans there's no doubt but that Dave will break Brady's record.

Indeed but for a row with Charlton back in 1986 when he refused to change his holiday plans O'Leary would probably be the record holder by now. After playing in Jack's first game in charge in March 1986 David didn't figure in the green jersey again until November 1988, missing 23 games.

Meanwhile O'Leary should have little difficulty in breaking Brady's World Cup record for The Republic. At present the former Arsenal colleagues share the Irish record with 22 games each and if selected against Albania this month O'Leary would hold the honour.

Dashed

The World Cup opener against Albania will be Jack Charlton's 30th home game in charge of the Republic. Albania will become the 30th different country to play the Republic since he took over. He has lost to only six .

Shelbourne are the League of Ireland Premier Division champions for the first time since 1962. The Dublin Reds bridged a 30-year gap by taking the title with ease.

Their only hiccup was on St. Patrick's Day when they had two players sent off and lost 5-0 at home to Derry City. But Shelbourne's hopes of a League and Cup double were dashed by Dublin rivals Bohemians who knocked them out of the FAI Cup in the quarter-finals.

Limerick City are the First Division champions, success in his first season in charge for Sam Allardyce.

Cork City have unveiled plans for £3 million stadium at Bishopstown near the city. A 77 acre site has been purchased from University College Cork and with the help of Government and FAI grants the Cork club are hopeful of having phase one of the project completed by August this year when they hope to play some money raising friendlies against English clubs.

Spectators at this year's FAI Cup Final at Lansdowne Road will be all seated. The FAI will use the "bucket seats" which they have had to install on the terraces for the World Cup qualifying games.

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BELGIUM BY GILBERT ROUSSELLE

LIEGE IN DANGER

FC LIEGE became the seventh club this season to change managers, but still look in grave danger of relegation.

A run of only four points from nine games cost Robert Wasseige his job, with his assistant, Daniel Boccar, taking over until the end of the season.

Then former international Eric Gerets is expected to inherit the position — possibly with promotion his first target.

Eendracht Aalst look doomed after one spell of a single point in nine starts, with 25 goals conceded and only four scored. Genk also are in the relegation frame.

The title race has become much closer in recent weeks, with Anderlecht slipping and Club Brugge climbing. Their 13th successive League win added to Liege's problems.

When Anderlecht lost 2-1 at Molenbeek and Brugge won by the only goal at Ekeren, they became level on 42 points, with Standard two points behind. All three had played 28 games.

The other managerial casualties earlier in the season were Ladislav Novak (Molenbeek), Georges Heylens (Charleroi), Lazlo Fazekas (Aalst), Paul Theunis (Genk), Boudewijn Braem (Kortrijk) and Rene Verheyen (Waregem).

The 3-3 against France in Paris was Belgium's 506th full international. They have won 194, drawn 102 and lost 210, with 880 goals for and 953 against.

ISRAEL BY MARK RIVLIN

NEVER MIND THE QUALITY, WE'RE IN EUROPE

BARCELONA, Real Madrid, Milan and CSKA Moscow are just a few of the crack European teams who have been trounced by Maccabi Tel Aviv over the past ten years.

Unfortunately, for football afficionados, we're talking basketball — but from next season Israeli football clubs will be joining their basketball counterparts in European club competitions.

English tabloids will find plenty of material to add to the memorable "Wailing Wallies" *Sun* headline after England's disappointing 0-0 draw with Israel in 1988.

What the basketball lads have achieved is unlikely to be emulated in the near future by the footballers. No matter what clubs represent Israel, there are no great expectations that any European club's plans will be seriously upset by a trip to the Holy Land.

But for all associated with football in Israel, UEFA's decision to admit the national and club sides has been welcomed as a major breakthrough.

Prime Minister Shamir and Co. could take a lesson in diplomacy from Shaul Sviri, outgoing president of the Israeli Football Association, whose astute diplomacy and negotiating skills at Geneva have earned Israel the right to compete with the best.

Up to now, Israel's fate at international level has been determined by political considerations, with the national squad roaming round the world in the style of a makeshift pub team looking for a game on Hackney Marshes on a Sunday morning.

In the 50s and mid-60s Israel were in Europe for World Cup and Olympic qualifiers, but the clubs played in the Asian Cup.

After the 1967 victory in the other kind of campaign, the borders reached Australasia and the lads responded in style, beating Australia to reach the 1970 World Cup finals in Mexico.

Israeli football's finest hour . . . the 1970 World Cup finals.

Brief

Since then, it's been mainly Australasia, with a brief return to Europe for the 1982 qualifiers. There, under former Rotherham manager Jack Mansell, Israel trounced Portugal 4-1 and gave the Scots, Swedes and Irish a good run for their money.

FIFA's capacity for chasing the Israelis all over the globe took on a new dimension in the 1990 qualifiers. The reward for winning the Australasia group was a trip to Colombia.

The draw for the 1994 qualifiers was as kind as it could have been — France, Austria, Sweden, Bulgaria and Finland in Group Six.

Michel Platini, who flew over in a private jet to watch the friendly against CIS, said that from what he had seen he was not unduly worried. Local sportswriters are more excited about the prospects of following the team round Europe.

Club level is on a par with the Third Division in England. Only four of the 12 First Division teams attract gates over 5,000 and with players commanding salaries and status well above their ability, it is hardly surprising that a few clubs have difficulty in paying.

Many of the problems associated with the game here are due to the involvement of political factions. The three major sporting bodies, Hapoel, Maccabi and Betar, have a monopoly of power on the IFA executive.

The present menu is not a patch of what was on offer 20 years ago, when the quality of football and the gates were much higher. The success of the basketball clubs cannot be matched by the football clubs.

Apart from former Soviet Union goalkeeper Victor Chanov, who plays for Maccabi Haifa, most of the imported players are your competent solid defender type, attracted by the salary.

But the past three seasons have given rise to a new optimism, due to the emergence of some highly talented home-grown coaches and players.

Giora Spiegel, a member of the 1970 World Cup squad, has transformed Bnei Yehuda Tel Aviv into one of Israel's top teams by astute tactical coaching.

Maccabi Tel Aviv coach Avraham Grant has produced a skilful attacking team of rare quality, and last season's champions, Maccabi Haifa, have Tal Banin and Eyal Berkovitz, two of Israel's most talented young players for years.

The youth and junior national squads have had some success in European competitions, and the infrastructure of the game is sound, with playing seemingly more popular than watching.

In the short term, Israel will benefit greatly from participation in Europe, particularly in the area of match fitness — given the strenuous army basic training undertaken by the young players, it is somewhat surprising that we lag behind in this area.

In the long term, who knows?

ALBANIA BY GEZIM NUSHI

FOTO BACK IN THE PICTURE

NATIONAL manager Bejkush Birce is optimistic about his country's World Cup qualification chances, after visiting Greece to watch expatriate Albanians playing there.

There are ten in all, and Birce was most impressed by goalkeeper Foto Strakosha, now with Ethnikos. Strakosha was one of the first Albanians to leave the county when the political unrest began. He had won one cap, against Iceland in Reykjavik, while with Dinamo Tirana but is now back in the squad.

Albania need a reliable goalkeeper, having used three in their six matches last season. Although Strakosha is now 28, he is improving at Ethnikos.

Birce also welcomed the Albanian Football Federation's split from the Olympic Committee, saying: "This will improve conditions for our footballers, and I am sure our results will be better in future."

NORWAY BY SIGURD ODEGAARD

LYN LOOKING TO THE TOP

THE clubs will soon clash in League matches again, with months of preparations behind them and signs of exciting matches to come.

The two who have dominated the past couple of seasons, Rosenborg and Viking, will face a new challenger for the title, Lyn of Oslo.

Lyn, a club of long traditions, had the best run of any Norwegian club in European cups. In the late 60s they reached the quarter-finals of the Cup-winners' Cup.

Their first season back in the First Division was characterised by instability but their young players gained the experience needed to make an even stronger challenge this time.

Former Iceland captain Teitur Thordarsson, who had professional experience in France (Lens and Cannes) is manager. Lyn have added some new players to the squad this season, and expect Stein Amundsen (from Lillestrom) and Ronny Johnsen (Eik) to blossom. Thordarsson adds: "Ola Dybwad Olsen and Frode Nicholaisen are two youngsters who have done well."

Thordarsson stresses the progress Norwegian clubs have made, and says: "Despite the fact that none of our clubs qualified for the second round of the European cups, Start played wonderful attacking football last season, and Rosenborg and Viking are capable of beating foreign teams.

"The trouble is that our national season is played through the summer months, in contrast to most other European countries where the season starts in the autumn. There is a long period from the time the teams qualify for Europe to the time they actually start playing in the competitions."

ESTONIA AND FINLAND BY PENTTI HIETANEN

SHINING KRISTAL

HOPES for the coming World Cup rest on young striker Marko Kristal.

He is only 18 but is rated as his country's outstanding talent, and he has already created interest among foreign clubs.

Kristal, son of a taxi driver, plays for FC Flora of Tallinn, and is on full-time terms. He stands out for his technique, prodigious work-rate and ability to snap up half-chances.

Aivar Pohlak, Flora's coach, believes that the long-haired, dark-featured Kristal has what it takes to become a big name in the game.

FC Flora, with a team whose average age is 20, are favourites to win Estonia's mini-league, which lasts only two months. The winners will take part in next season's Champions' Cup, while the "real" league begins in August.

Uno Piir, the national coach, is still not sure if he can call on players of Russian origins for his side. About 40 per cent of Estonia's population are Russians.

Piir's problem is that the Russians provide the backbone of Estonian football: 14 of the 15 First Division teams speak Russian with FC Flora the sole exception. The Piir checking list includes midfielder Valery Karpin, who plays for Spartak Moscow and is eligible to represent Estonia. But the politicians will have their say before Estonia tackle Switzerland next August.

MIXU'S RECORD MOVE

MIXU PAATELAINEN became the most expensive Finnish player ever when he switched from Dundee United to Aberdeen in a £400,000 move.

The hefty 25-year-old Mixu (right) had been with United since 1987. He had recently fallen out of favour, but convinced Aberdeen manager Willie Miller with a powerful performance in Finland's 1-1 draw with Scotland in Glasgow.

Jukka Vakkila's Finland have become Europe's draw specialists, having drawn eight of their internationals since the 1990 World Cup.

Vakkila says: "In the past we often felt lucky to gain a draw, especially away. Today we can be disappointed for not winning."

Finland's top scorers at the full international level are Mika Lipponen and Ari Hjelm, both with 11, but they are nearing the veteran stage.

Paatelainen has scored only five times for his country, while Vakkila's other regular forwards, Kimmo Tarkkio and Petri Jarvinen, have only three and two goals respectively.

FRANCE BY ANDRE DUCLOS

DEFENCE SPRINGS A LEAK

MICHEL PLATINI cannot be too happy about his defence in the last few weeks before the European Championship.

The elegant sweeper Blanc did not play against Belgium, in that hectic, eventual 3-3 draw in Paris, so you could not lay blame at his door for the goals conceded by a French rearguard shipping water in a worrying way.

At Wembley, Blanc looked very good going forward, far less convincing when he had to defend; something he is never so keen to do. Against Belgium the Marseille player, Casoni, came into the defence. Petit played the first half, with the veteran Fernandez going on in midfield only in the second.

The little Tahitian left-winger from Auxerre, Vahirua, got the second French equaliser just before the break, exploiting a pass by Papin, whose penalty and spectacular scissors kick achieved the first and third equalisers.

Only a friendly, perhaps, but the Belgians surprised our team with their lively, adventurous play.

France v England in Sweden? Cantona — who looked sharp again — shrugs off the suggestion that the 2-0 defeat at Wembley will have any bearing or significance. It could be 3-0 or 4-0 either way, he jokes.

The word is that Basile Boli, the Marseille stopper, will be following Blanc to Naples next season. But the immediate future of Marseille remains as mysterious as the immediate future of the great Bernard Tapie himself.

Rumours

In the recent local elections, in which he was used as a kind of wild card by the Socialists, Tapie did a great deal better than was initially expected. But his business affairs are enigmatic.

He managed to raise the huge sum of money needed to buy the adidas sports manufacturing firm, but did he buy at the top of the market, and how are things proceeding, now?

There are disturbing rumours that production has had to be considerably cut down, scarcely a surprise in the present recession. Then there is the ever-hovering threat of investigations into Marseille's allegedly unorthodox payments to players some three seasons ago.

Tapie cheerfully insists that there is no substance in any such stories that they have simply been put around by his political enemies. For his sake and that of the club, I hope this is true. But Marseille are in the melting pot as far as next season's team is concerned, and Tapie's intention to indulge in a policy of what might be called creative destruction could well rebound on him.

Although he agreed with Milan to keep the non-existent secret a secret, it was known long before the official announcement that Papin would be on his way to Milan at the season's end, for a reported £8 million.

Chris Waddle is bound to go if Tapie stays as president, in which case he is anxious to remain in France, and might well wind up with Paris Saint Germain, a much improved team under Portuguese manager Artur Jorge.

Trevor Steven seems almost sure to go, though he, like Waddle, has had a satisfactory season. Again, Tapie denies stories that Rangers have not been paid all the possibly excessive £5 million agreed as fee for Steven. But do not be surprised if he is back at Ibrox Park next season.

Revenge

For Rui Barros, a kind of revenge was sweet. I say a KIND of revenge because, when the Portuguese midfielder headed the only goal in Monaco (above right), the opposition was not Juventus, but Roma.

Juve were the club who kicked him out after a perfectly good season, when he had joined them from FC Porto.

The great Avvocato, godfather and patron of Juve, Gianni Agnelli, was the one who said sneeringly that it might be as well to let Rui Barros go, because in the huge new Stadio delle Alpi on the edge of Turin, the distance from stands to pitch was so great that you would not be able to see so small a player.

Seeing how some of the expensive foreign midfielders, especially the Soviets, have performed for Juventus since then, you can hardly blame Rui Barros if he is having a quiet laugh; though he was at pains to point out after the Roma game that his satisfaction came simply from scoring the winner, not from getting it against an Italian club.

Enzo Scifo must have been truly happy, too, with such a fine game for Belgium against France, though his own spell with Auxerre was anything but unsatisfactory. Indeed he rebuilt his career, after being banished by Inter.

"I matured at Auxerre," he says. "I rediscovered football."

This enabled him to cope better with Italian football when he joined Torino.

French football is faster, he says, but it is harder to score in Italy against such well prepared, tactically shrewd defences. Scifo, like Papin, scored from a penalty in the France-Belgium game.

While Cantona finds English football faster than France, Scifo finds Italian football slower.

Ibrox bound? . . . Trevor Steven could be on his way back to Rangers after just one season at Marseille.

TURKEY BY HASAN CEMALI

Semih beaten up by Trabzon mob

CROWD trouble in Trabzon marred the exciting later stages of the championship race.

There had been no on-the-pitch incidents during Trabzonspor's 3-2 win over Fenerbahce, but at the final whistle many fans invaded the pitch and attacked some of the visiting players.

One, Yavakuran Semih, had his nose broken and eyebrow split. Home players helped to get him to the dressing room, while the crowd attacked visiting fans and later stoned the Fenerbahce bus on its way to the airport.

President Metin Asak declared that his club would never play in Trabzon again, adding: "Our lives were at stake."

The match was shown live on television, and there were many complaints about lack of police action.

The Turkish Football Federation ruled that the Avni Aker Stadium be closed for two games, which seems a light punishment.

Fans there have a reputation for misbehaviour: remember the "This is hell, and we're the angels" quote from Besiktas manager Gordon Milne earlier in the season?

Trabzon's victory, with Hami getting a late winner, narrowed the gap between them and Fenerbahce to two points, but Besiktas were still four clear after beating Ankaragucu 1-0 with a goal from Gokhan.

They had 57 points from 23 games, Fenerbahce 53 from 22, and Trabzon 51 from 23.

There could be a late challenger — Galatasaray, second last year, whose 2-1 away win over Adana Desmirspor meant that they had 48 points with games in hand on the top club.

MALTA BY BRIAN DEBONO

President Abela stands down

PRESIDENT George Abela's decision to give up the position after ten years is a blow to football in Malta.

During his time as head of the Football Association on the island there have been many improvements, with professionalism, foreign coaches and better performances by the national team. Dr Abela has decided not to seek re-election, and he will be hard to replace.

Pippo Psaila, who succeeded Horst Heese as national coach, could be well satisfied.

In South Korea's President's Cup, Malta beat Indonesia 3-0, lost 5-2 to Egypt, and drew 1-1 against the host nation.

Then came a 2-0 defeat of Libya in a friendly, and a 1-1 draw with Greece in the European Championship qualifiers, followed by victory in the Rothmans Tournament, with a 0-0 draw against Norway's Olympic team and a 1-0 defeat of Iceland's full international side.

One defeat in a seven-match spell made a welcome change and reflected great credit on Psaila, his assistant, Bulgarian Georgi Deanov, and the players.

New striker Stefan Sultana (right) of Hamrun was particularly impressive, with Degiorgio, Gregory, Buhagiar and Brincat giving good support.

Valletta have been dominating the League, with a 10-2 record. Brazilian Pouplin, national skipper Laferla and goalkeeper Cini have been outstanding.

Sliema, with a Croatian, Filipovic, and a Canadian, Vigh, seem the only team capable of challenging Valletta for top spot.

Floriana, in third place, had a 1-0 win over Hamrun and a 2-1 FA Trophy victory over Hibs in the space of five days. New Zealander Wright, a new arrival, scored both goals in the second game.

The outstanding game so far was Sliema's 4-3 win over Hamrun, last year's champions, with the winner in the last few seconds. Hamrun have been disappointing, despite Sultana's nine goals — the top individual total in the League.

Newcomers Imqabba and St. Andrews have been struggling, and so have Zurrieq — despite an Italian coach, Polverini. Two of these three must go down.

Results

OLYMPIC QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT: (REST OF WORLD)

EUROPE

Extra-preliminary matches

11.09.90	Liechtenstein v Austria	0-6
16.10.90	Austria v Liechtenstein	10-0

CONCACAF

2 participants to qualify

Caribbean Zone

1st Round

28.10.90	Puerto Rico v Jamaica	0-3
12.11.90	Jamaica v Puerto Rico	2-0
21.10.90	Haiti v Cuba	1-1
28.10.90	Cuba v Haiti	2-2
26.10.90	Aruba v St Lucia	3-3
11.11.90	Aruba v St Lucia	0-9
29.10.90	Antigua v Barbados	0-0
11.11.90	Barbados v Antigua	5-0
21.10.90	Dutch Antilles v Surinam	0-1
04.11.90	Surinam v Dutch Antilles	0-0

2nd Round

17.02.91	Barbados v Surinam	0-0
10.03.91	Surinam v Barbados	2-1
24.02.91	Trin. & Tobago v Jamaica	1-0
03.03.91	Jamaica v Trin. & Tobago	1-0
10.03.91	St Lucia v Haiti	1-1
24.03.91	Haiti v St Lucia	2-1

Central Zone

17.03.91	Guatemala v Honduras	2-2
04.04.91	Honduras v Guatemala	2-0
17.03.91	Belize v El Salvador	0-2
24.03.91	El Salvador v Belize	3-0

Panama v Costa Rica*

*= Costa Rica suspended from all FIFA competitions with age limit. Panama qualified for 3rd round.

Caribbean Zone

3rd Round

Group winners & best runner-up go through

Group A

01.09.91	Surinam v Mexico	1-1
05.09.91	Honduras v Mexico	1-1
11.09.91	Mexico v Honduras	0-1
16.09.91	Mexico v Surinam	6-0
24.09.91	Honduras v Sunnam	2-0
06.10.91	Surinam v Honduras	0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Honduras	4	3	1	0	6	1	7
Mexico	4	1	2	1	8	3	4
Surinam	4	0	1	3	1	11	1

Group B

05.05.91	Canada v Trin. & Tobago	3-0
12.05.91	El Salvador v Canada	3-1
19.05.91	Trin. & Tobago v Canada	1-3
14.07.91	El Salvador v Trin. & Tobago#	2-0
28.07.91	Trin. & Tobago v El Salvador	2-0
31.08.91	Canada v El Salvador	4-0

#= walkover.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Canada	4	3	0	1	11	4	6
El Salvador	4	2	0	2	5	7	4
Trin. & Tobago	4	1	0	3	3	8	2

Group C

23.06.91	United States v Haiti	8-0
14.07.91	Panama v United States	1-1
20.07.91	United States v Panama	7-1
26.08.91	Haiti v United States	0-2
21.09.91	Panama v Haiti	2-2
30.11.91	Haiti v Panama	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
United States	4	3	1	0	18	2	7
Panama	3	0	2	1	4	10	2
Haiti	3	0	1	2	2	12	1

4th Round

03.05.92	Mexico v United States	1-2
05.04.92	Canada v Mexico	1-1
05.04.92	United States v Honduras	4-3
12.04.92	Canada v Honduras	2-2
19.04.92	Honduras v United States	
21.04.92	Mexico v Canada	
26.04.92	United States v Mexico	
26.04.92	Honduras v Canada	
06.05.92	Honduras v Mexico	
10.05.92	United States v Canada	
17.05.92	Mexico v Honduras	
17.05.92	Canada v United States	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
United States	2	2	0	0	6	4	4
Canada	2	0	2	0	3	3	2
Mexico	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Honduras	2	0	1	1	5	6	1

ASIA

3 participants to qualify

West-Central Asia - 1st Round

Group A

30.08.91	Yemen v Pakistan	1-0
	Qatar v Iran	2-0
06.09.91	Iran v UAE	2-2
	Yemen v Qatar	1-1
13.09.91	Pakistan v Qatar	0-4
	UAE v Yemen	2-1
18.09.91	Yemen v Iran	1-1
	Pakistan v UAE	0-1
23.09.91	Qatar v UAE	2-1
	Iran v Pakistan	5-0
28.09.91	Pakistan v Yemen	0-2
	Iran v Qatar	2-0
04.10.91	UAE v Iran	0-1
	Qatar v Yemen	3-0
09.10.91	Qatar v Pakistan	2-0
	Yemen v UAE	0-0
14.10.91	Iran v Yemen	2-1
	UAE v Pakistan	2-0
20.10.91	UAE v Qatar	0-2
	Pakistan v Iran	0-6

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Qatar	8	6	1	1	16	4	13
Iran	8	5	2	1	19	6	12
UAE	8	3	2	3	8	8	8
Yemen	8	2	3	3	7	9	7
Pakistan	8	0	0	8	0	23	0

Group B

(Tournament in Hyderabad, India)

04.08.91	Oman v India	1-1
05.08.91	Lebanon v Syria	0-1
07.08.91	Kuwait v Oman	1-0
09.08.91	Syria v Kuwait	1-1
08.08.91	Lebanon v India	3-1
10.08.91	Oman v Lebanon	1-0
11.08.91	Syria v India	1-0
12.08.91	Lebanon v Kuwait	1-2
13.08.91	Oman v Syria	0-0
14.08.91	Kuwait v India	2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Kuwait	4	3	1	0	6	3	7
Syria	4	2	2	0	3	1	6
Oman	4	2	1	1	2	1	5
Lebanon	4	1	0	3	4	5	2
India	4	0	1	3	3	7	1

Group C

(Tournament in Bahrain)

19.09.91	Bahrain v Sri Lanka	6-0
19.09.91	S. Arabia v Jordan	1-2
22.09.91	Bahrain v Jordan	4-0
23.09.91	Sri Lanka v S. Arabia	1-5
25.09.91	Jordan v Sri Lanka	7-0
	S. Arabia v Bahrain	2-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Bahrain	3	2	0	1	10	2	4
Saudi Arabia	3	2	0	1	8	3	4
Jordan	3	2	0	1	9	5	4
Sri Lanka	3	0	0	3	1	18	0

East Asia — 1st Round.

Group D

1st Leg (S Korea/Seoul)

18.05.91	S Korea v Philippines	10-0
	Bangladesh v Thailand	2-3
20.05.91	Malaysia v Philippines	5-0
	Bangladesh v S Korea	0-6
22.05.91	Bangladesh v Malaysia	0-1
	Thailand v S Korea	1-2
24.05.91	Thailand v Malaysia	4-1
	Philippines v Bangladesh	0-8
26.05.91	Philippines v Thailand	1-7
	S Korea v Malaysia	0-0

2nd Leg (Malaysia/Kuala Lumpur)

29.06.91	Malaysia v Thailand	1-0
	S Korea v Philippines	7-0
01.07.91	S Korea v Malaysia	2-0
	Thailand v Bangladesh	4-0
03.07.91	Bangladesh v S Korea	0-1
	Philippines v Malayasia	0-5
05.07.91	Philippines v Bangladesh	0-3
	Thailand v S Korea	0-2
07.07.91	Thailand v Philippines	6-0
	Malaysia v Bangladesh	0-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
S Korea	8	7	1	0	30	1	15
Thailand	8	5	0	3	25	9	10
Malaysia	8	4	1	3	13	7	9
Bangladesh	8	3	0	5	14	15	6
Philippines	8	0	0	8	1	51	0

Group E

1st Leg (N Korea/Pyongyang)

15.08.91	N Korea v Nepal	5-0
	Maldives v China	0-12
17.08.91	Singapore v N Korea	0-2
	Nepal v Maldives	0-1
19.08.91	N Korea v Maldives	4-0
	China v Singapore	3-0
21.08.91	Nepal v China	0-4
	Maldives v Singapore	1-1
23.08.91	Nepal v Singapore	1-4
	China v N Korea	1-1

2nd Leg

(China/Beijing)

26.08.91	N Korea v Nepal	5-0
	Maldives v China	0-17
28.08.91	Singapore v N Korea	1-3
	Nepal v Maldives	2-1
30.08.91	N Korea v Maldives	7-0
	China v Singapore	3-0
01.09.91	Nepal v China	0-10
	Maldives v Singapore	2-4
03.09.91	Nepal v Singapore	1-4
	China v N Korea	1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
China	8	7	1	0	51	1	15
N Korea	8	6	1	1	27	3	13
Singapore	8	3	1	4	14	16	7
Maldives	8	1	1	6	5	47	3
Nepal	8	1	0	7	4	34	2

Group F

08.06.91	Hong Kong v Taiwan	1-1
09.06.91	Indonesia v Japan	1-2
16.06.91	Indonesia v Taiwan	2-1
	Hong Kong v Japan	3-1
23.06.91	Indonesia v Hong Kong	0-0
	Taiwan v Japan	0-3
29.06.91	Japan v Taiwan	2-0
30.06.91	Hong Kong v Indonesia	1-1
07.07.91	Japan v Hong Kong	3-0
	Taiwan v Indonesia	3-1
13.07.91	Japan v Indonesia	3-1
14.07.91	Taiwan v Hong Kong	0-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Japan	6	5	0	1	14	5	10
Hong Kong	6	2	3	1	6	6	7
Indonesia	6	1	2	3	6	10	4
Taiwan	6	1	1	4	5	10	3

2nd Round

(Tournament in Malaysia)

18.01.92	Bahrain v Qatar	0-1
18.01.92	S Korea v Kuwait	1-1
19.01.92	Japan v China	1-2
21.01.92	Bahrain v S Korea	0-1
21.01.92	China v Qatar	0-1
21.01.92	Kuwait v Japan	1-1
24.01.92	Qatar v S Korea	1-0
25.01.92	Kuwait v China	0-1
25.01.92	Japan v Bahrain	6-1
27.01.92	S Korea v Japan	1-0
27.01.92	Bahrain v China	0-3
28.01.92	Qatar v Kuwait	0-3
30.01.92	Japan v Qatar	0-1
30.01.92	China v S Korea	1-3
30.01.92	Kuwait v Bahrain	3-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Qatar	5	4	0	1	4	3	8
S Korea	5	3	1	1	6	3	7
Kuwait	5	2	2	1	8	3	6
China	5	3	0	2	7	5	6
Japan	5	1	1	3	8	6	3
Bahrain	5	0	0	5	1	14	0

Top three qualify for Olympic Games finals in Barcelona.

AFRICA

3 participants to qualify

2nd Round

Group 1

	Mauritius v **Zambia	
10.08.91	Sudan v Egypt	1-2
11.08.91	Mozambique v Uganda	0-1
23.08.91	Egypt v Sudan	2-0
24.08.91	Uganda v Mozambique	3-1
	*Ethiopia v Malawi	
	**Gabon v Cameroon	
	*Angola v Ivory Coast	

Group 2

10.08.91	Tunisia v Senegal	3-1
11.08.91	Algeria v Sierra Leone	0-0
11.08.91	Morocco v Mauritania	6-0
	Liberia* v Togo	
	Ghana v Guinea**	
11.08.91	Zaire* v Zimbabwe	
23.08.91	Mauritania v Morocco	0-0
24.08.91	Sierra Leone v Algeria	1-0
25.08.91	Senegal v Tunisia	1-0
	Togo v Liberia*	
	Zimbabwe v Zaire*	

3rd Round

Group 1

25.10.91	Egypt v Malawi	3-1
26.10.91	Uganda v Cameroon	1-2
09.11.91	Malawi v Egypt	0-0
10.11.91	Cameroon v Uganda	2-0
	Mauritius v Ivory Coast*	

Egypt, Cameroon & Mauritius qualify for 4th Round.

Group 2

27.10.91	Tunisia v Zimbabwe	3-1
27.10.91	Ghana v Sierra Leone	2-1
09.11.91	Sierra Leone v Ghana	2-2
10.11.91	Zimbabwe v Tunisia	5-2
	Togo* v Morocco	

Zimbabwe, Ghana & Morocco qualify for 4th Round.

4th Round

07.02.92	Egypt v Zimbabwe	3-0
08.02.92	Cameroon v Morocco	0-0
08.02.92	Ghana v Mauritius	6-0
23.02.91	Zimbabwe v Egypt	1-1
23.02.91	Morocco v Cameroon	0-2
23.02.92	Mauritius v Ghana	1-4

*= Withdrew from tournament.
**= Suspended from tournament.

Egypt, Ghana & Cameroon qualify for Olympic Games finals.

OCEANIA

0 or 1 participant to qualify

1st Round

19.05.91	Australia v Papua NG	4-0
22.05.91	Australia v N.Zealand	2-0
26.05.91	Australia v Fiji	7-0
07.11.91	New Zealand v Fiji	4-0
09.11.91	Papua NG v Fiji	0-2
11.11.91	Papua NG v Australia	0-5
13.11.91	N.Zealand v Australia	1-2
15.11.91	Papua NG v N.Zealand	1-3
16.11.91	Fiji v Australia	0-3
18.11.91	N.Zealand v Papua NG	4-2
20.11.91	Fiji v N.Zealand	0-0
22.11.91	Fiji v Papua NG	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Australia	6	6	0	0	23	1	12
New Zealand	6	3	1	2	12	7	7
Fiji	6	1	2	3	3	15	3
Papua NG	6	0	1	5	2	19	1

Australia qualify for play-off against fifth-placed European team.

SOUTH AMERICA

2 to qualify

Group A

Brazil, Paraguay, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela

31.01.92	Paraguay v Venezuela	1-0
01.02.92	Brazil v Peru	2-1
03.02.92	Peru v Colombia	1-4
03.02.92	Brazil v Paraguay	1-0
05.02.92	Peru v Venezuela	3-0
05.02.92	Brazil v Colombia	0-2
07.02.92	Colombia v Venezuela	4-0
07.02.92	Paraguay v Peru	7-1
09.02.92	Paraguay v Colombia	0-0
09.02.92	Brazil v Venezuela	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Colombia	4	3	1	0	10	1	7
Paraguay	4	2	1	1	8	2	5
Brazil	4	2	1	1	4	4	5
Peru	4	1	0	3	6	13	2
Venezuela	4	0	1	3	1	9	1

Group B

Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Bolivia, Ecuador.

02.02.92	Uruguay v Ecuador	0-2
02.02.92	Argentina v Bolivia	1-0
04.02.92	Uruguay v Chile	1-0
04.02.92	Argentina v Ecuador	1-0
06.02.92	Ecuador v Bolivia	4-1
06.02.92	Argentina v Chile	1-1
08.02.92	Uruguay v Bolivia	4-0
08.02.92	Chile v Ecuador	1-5
10.02.92	Chile v Bolivia	Cancelled
10.02.92	Argentina v Uruguay	1-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Ecuador	4	3	0	1	11	3	6
Uruguay	4	3	0	1	7	3	6
Argentina	4	2	1	1	4	3	5
Chile	3	0	1	2	2	7	1
Bolivia	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

Final Round:

12.02.92	Ecuador v Paraguay	0-1
12.02.92	Colombia v Uruguay	3-0
14.02.92	Ecuador v Uruguay	0-1
14.02.92	Colombia v Paraguay	0-1
16.02.92	Paraguay v Uruguay	0-0
16.02.92	Colombia v Ecuador	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Paraguay	3	2	1	0	2	0	5
Colombia	3	1	1	1	4	2	3
Uruguay	3	1	1	1	1	3	3
Ecuador	3	0	0	1	1	3	1

Paraguay & Colombia qualify for Olympic Games finals.

UNDER-21 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

The UEFA Under-21 tournament also doubles as the Olympic qualifying tournament with the exception of Scotland, England, San Marino and Luxembourg who do not take part in the Olympics. Spain qualify as hosts.

Quarter-finals

1st leg

10.03.92	Germany v Scotland	1-1
11.03.92	Holland v Sweden	2-1
11.03.92	Denmark v Poland	5-0
11.03.92	Italy v Czechoslovakia	2-1

2nd leg

24.03.92	Scotland v Germany	4-3
25.03.92	Sweden v Holland	1-0
25.03.92	Italy v Czechoslovakia	2-0
25.03.92	Poland v Denmark	1-1

● **Denmark, Italy, Sweden and Poland qualify for Olympic Games finals.**
● ***Holland qualify for play-off with Australia.***

Semi-finals

Denmark v Italy
Scotland v Sweden

● Note, the semi-finals are for the European Under-21 Championship only and do not affect the Olympic Qualifying tournament.

● FOR the first time, the FIFA Referees' Committee has called on specialised linesmen as well as referees to officiate at an international competition.
The tournament, which kicks off on July 24, will have 14 referees and 14 linesmen.
The referees are:
An-Yan Lim Kee Chong (Mauritius), Mohamed Sendid (Algeria), Ali Mohammed Bujsaim (UAE), Tachi Kiichiro (Japan), Arturo Brizio Carter (Mexico), Arturo Angeles (US), Juan Francisco Escobar (Paraguay), Jose Torres Cadena (Colombia), Marcio Rezende De Freitas (Brazil), Markus Merk (Germany), Manuel Diaz Vega (Spain), Lube Spassov (Bulgaria), Fabio Baldas (Italy), and Philip Don (England).

ROUND UP

ONLY three places now remain to be filled in the Olympic football finals tournament following the quarter-finals in the European section.
Denmark were virtually assured of their place after their 5-0 first leg victory against Poland. A 1-1 draw in the return in Poland ensured an easy 6-1 aggregate victory.
Much closer though between Holland and Sweden. The first leg in Utrecht produced a 2-1 win for the Dutch, but Christer Furseth's goal for the Swedes was vital. A 1-0 win for Sweden in the return earned their ticket to Barcelona by virtue of that away goal.
Italy had few problems overcoming Czechoslovakia, having won the away leg 2-1 with goals by Melli and a Kotulek own goal. The return was a 2-0 victory for the Italians, giving them a 4-1 aggregate.
Scotland did well to knock Germany out, winning 5-4 on aggregate, after a 1-1 draw in Bochum and a fine 4-3 victory at Aberdeen, having been two goals down.
The Scots, however will not take part in the Games in Barcelona, because they are only a part of Great Britain — who no longer enter the football tournament anyway. So Germany's defeat left the door open for another country to qualify as "lucky loser" — the team with the best points-per-game record during the qualifiers and quarter-finals.
The Poles still managed to qualify despite that disaster against Denmark, because they had the best record of the quarter-final losers.
As a further complication, the fifth-placed European nation, Holland, still have a chance to get through — if they dispose of the Oceania winners, Australia, in a play-off.
The two remaining places in the finals will be occupied by teams from the CONCACAF region, where the final round qualifiers are taking place at present.
After the opening four games, the United States lead the group with four points. A 2-1 victory in Mexico was followed by a 4-3 home win against Honduras, with Steve Snow scoring a hat-trick for the Americans.
Canada are second after two home draws and the two meetings between them in May could prove vital.
A share of the points in those two games should ensure that both join Egypt, Morocco, Ghana, Qatar, South Korea, Kuwait, Paraguay, Colombia, Spain, Denmark, Italy, Sweden and Poland in the finals — with the Dutch or the Australians completing the quota.

BY JOHN **KELLY**

EURO LEAGUE RESULTS

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, MAR 15
(Continued from last month)

ITALY Weekend

Fiorentina 1 (Maselli 53), **Ascoli 2** (Troglio 21, Di Aniello 36). **Att:** 27,004.
Cagliari 0, Atalanta 0. Att: 25,000.
AC Milan 2 (Simone 37, Van Basten 70), **Bari 0. Att:** 70,000.
Sampdoria 2 (Vialli 14, Mancini 41), **Genoa 2** (Signorini 3, Bortolazzi 17). **Att:** 36,700.
Napoli 1 (Zola 14), **Internazionale 1** (Desideri 60). **Att:** 85,000.
Cremonese 0, Juventus 2 (Julio Cesar 38, Baggio 90). **Att:** 17,000.
Torino 2, Parma 0. Att: 30,200.
Foggia 1 (Signorini 90), **AS Roma 2** (Hassler 30, Aldair 74). **Att:** 19,500.
Lecce 2 (Sosa 58, Stroppa 89), **Verona 0. Att:** 35,000.

PORTUGAL Weekend

Estoril 0, Salguerios 2
Vit. Guimaraes 0, Gil Vicente 0
Sporting 1, Boavista 1
Torriense 1, Penafiel 0
Ferreira 1, Beira Mar 1
Maritimo 3, Uniao Madeira 1
Famalicao 0, Farense 1
FC Porto 2, Sp. Braga 0

SCOTLAND Midweek

Hibernian 1 (Evans 89), **Rangers 3** (McCoist 39, Hateley 45, 67). **Att:** 13,019.
Falkirk 2 (Cadette 10, McGivern 88), **Dunfermline 0. Att:** 3,007.

Weekend
Celtic 1 (Collins 73), **Aberdeen 0. Att:** 29,202.
Dundee Utd 1 (Cleland 16), **Hibernian 0. Att:** 5,588.
Dunfermline 1 (Leitch 57), **Rangers 3** (Mikhailchenko 5, 21, Nisbet 11). **Att:** 12,274.
Falkirk 1 (Sloan pen 8), **St Mirren 0. Att:** 4,333.
Hearts 2 (McKinlay 37, Millar 66), **St Johnstone 0. Att:** 8,799.
Motherwell 0, Airdrie 3 (Jack 42, Conn 48, Boyle 69). **Att:** 5,065.

SPAIN Weekend

Logrones 1 (Polster 38), **Real Madrid 0. Att:** 14,500.
La Coruna 5 (Claudio 4, 53, Uralde pen 42, 78, 89), **Sporting Gijon 2** (Abelardo 25, Manjarin 27). **Att:** 23,000.
Albacete 0, Sevilla 0. Att: 14,000.
Burgos 2 (Edu 6, Narciso 70), **Athletic Bilbao 0. Att:** 12,000.
Mallorca 1 (Galvez 90), **Valladolid 1** (Onesimo 87). **Att:** 15,000.
Espanol 3 (Escaich 33, Kuznetsov pen 68, Pizo Gomez 90), **Cadiz 1** (Indio Vazquez pen 69). **Att:** 18,000.
Real Sociedad 1 (Kodro 33), **Tenerife 0. Att:** 15,000.
Zaragoza 0, Valencia 3 (Arroyo 60, Penev 84, 88). **Att:** 25,000.
Oviedo 3 (Jankovic 3, Bango 50, Sarriugarte 59), **Osasuna 1** (Stavanovic 31). **Att:** 16,450.
Atletico Madrid 2 (Manolo 5, 15), **Barcelona 2** (Nadal 74, Bakero 79). **Att:** 55,000.

SWITZERLAND Weekend

Servette 1 (Dobrovolski 77), **Lausanne Sports 0. Att:** 9,400.
Neuchatel 2 (Chassot 28, Wittel 57), **Sion 2** (Manfreda 44, Gertachen 8). **Att:** 16,000.
St Gallen 4 (Blatter 35 73, Zambrano 58, Estay 89), **Young Boys 1** (Christensen 3). **Att:** 7,000.

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, MARCH 22

AUSTRIA Weekend

Austria Wien 3 (Stoger 29, Hasenhuttl 40, 55), **Admira Wacker 2** (Marshall 40, Kuhbauer 63). **Att:** 5,000.
Austria Salzburg 0, Rapid Wien 2 (Metliskj 66, 83). **Att:** 14,000.
Vorwarts Steyr 2 (Heraf 43, Waldhor 79), **FC Tirol 0. Att:** 7,000.
Stahl Linz 0, St Polten 0. Att: 4,000.

BELGIUM Weekend

Mechelen 0, Standard 1 (Vos 37). **Att:** 12,000.
Beveren 0, Anderlecht 1 (Versavel 62). **Att:** 15,400.
FC Liege 0, Club Brugge 1 (Booy 30). **Att:** 8,000.
Charleroi 0, Gent 1 (Balenga 21). **Att:** 10,000.
Waregem 4 (Balogh 60, 72, Teppers 62, Van Hove 89), **Kortrijk 2** (Vidmar 35, Augustin 79). **Att:** 5,000.
Ekeren 2 (Hofmans 32, Ballenghlen 83), **Aalst 0. Att:** 2,000.
Lokeren 2 (Bosmans 43, Naudts 90), **Lierse 0. Att:** 4,000.
Molenbeek 1 (Van Ankeren 20), **Antwerp 0. Att:** 5,000.
Cercle Brugge 3 (Weber 22, pen 51, Debuyser 68), **Genk 1** (Busuttil 25). **Att:** 7,000.

ENGLAND Midweek

FA CUP — 6TH ROUND REPLAYS
Norwich City 2, Southampton 1
Sunderland 2, Chelsea 1

League
Nottingham F 1 (Clough 59), **Manchester U 0. Att:** 28,062.
Notts County 0, Everton 0. Att: 7,480.

Weekend

Chelsea 1 (Cundy 50), **Sheffield United 2** (Whitehouse 28, 61). **Att:** 11,247.
Coventry City 1 (Pearce 11), **Oldham Athletic 1** (Henry 29). **Att:** 12,840.
Crystal Palace 0, Aston Villa 0. Att: 15,368.
Liverpool 2 (Saunders 48, 81), **Tottenham Hotspur 1** (Stewart 74). **Att:** 39,968.
Manchester United 0, Wimbledon 0. Att: 45,428.
Norwich City 4 (Beckford 2, 83, 86, Newman 47), **Everton 3** (Johnston 11, 51, Beardsley 29). **Att:** 11,900.
Nottingham F 2 (Crosby 64, Keane 87), **Manchester C 0. Att:** 24,115.
Sheffield W 1 (Hirst 74), **Notts County 0. Att:** 23,910.
Southampton 2 (Shearer 68, Dowie 81), **Luton Town 1** (Pembridge 1). **Att:** 15,315.
West Ham United 2 (Small 29, Breacker 76), **QPR 2** (B. Allen 50, 69). **Att:** 20,401.
Arsenal 1 (Merson 80), **Leeds United 1** (Chapman 73). **Att:** 27,844.

FRANCE Midweek

St Etienne 2 (Haon pen 65, Pagal 90), **Nantes 1** (Vulic 53). **Att:** 11,455.

Weekend
Paris SG 3 (Ricardo 24, Ginola 69, pen 90), **Caen 1** (Dumas 71). **Att:** 25,000.
Montpellier 2 (Divert 17, Ziober 54), **Nantes 1** (Ferri 38). **Att:** 7,000.
Monaco 3 (Gnako 45, Wean 50, Fofana 77), **Metz 1** (Calderaro 75). **Att:** 25,000.
Rennes 0, Toulon 0. Att: 7,308.
Marseille 2 (Papin 53, Pele 88), **St Etienne 0. Att:** 30,000.
Lille 1 (Frandsen 50), **Nimes 1** (Vercruysse 39). **Att:** 3,500.
Le Havre 1 (Garande 66), **Lens 0. Att:** 9,218.
Lyon 0, Sochaux 1 (Vujovic 59). **Att:** 18,100.
Nancy 2 (Vairelles 5, Gava 55), **Auxerre 1** (Ferreri 68). **Att:** 9,150.
Cannes 2 (Priou 38, Oman Biyik 80), **Toulouse 0. Att:** 3,000.

GERMANY Midweek

MSV Duisburg 2 (Notthoff 54, Loose o.g. 56), **Fortuna D. 2** (Rahn 27, Schubert 81). **Att:** 18,000.

Weekend
VfL Bochum 1 (Hartmann o.g. 13), **Wattenscheid 1** (Langbein 40). **Att:** 20,000.
Hamburg SV 1 (Furtok 33), **Borussia Dortmund 1** (Chapuisat 28). **Att:** 31,500.
Dynamo Dresden 1 (Rosler 84), **Bayer Leverkusen 0. Att:** 15,000.
Koln 1 (Giske 45), **Borussia Mg. 1** (Max 4). **Att:** 27,000.
Eintracht Frankfurt 3 (Yeboah 25, A. Moller 49, Roth 64), **Bayern Munich 2** (Labbadia 38, Thon 69). **Att:** 60,000.
Stuttg. Kickers 3 (Marin 11, 69, pen 89), **Nurnberg 1** (Dorfner 78). **Att:** 8,000.
Hansa Rostock 0, Werder Bremen 0. Att: 12,000.
Fortuna D. 2 (Rahn 18, T. Aliofs 72), **Karlsruher SC 3** (Schmarov 16, 83, Reich 54). **Att:** 7,500.
Schalke 3 (Borodjuk 15, Sendscheid 31, Mihajlovic 62), **MSV Duisburg 0. Att:** 43,200.
Kaiserslautern 0, VfB Stuttgart 0. Att: 38,500.

GREECE Weekend

Xanthi 2, Korinthos 3
Ethnikos 1, Athinaikos 2
Doxa Drama 3, Serres 0
Aris Salonika 1, Pierikos 0
Panionios 2, Apollon 0
AEK Athens 3, Larissa 0
OFI Crete 1, PAOK 1
Panathinaikos 3, Heraklis 1
Panachaiki 0, Olympiakos 2

HOLLAND Weekend

Roda 2 (Arnold 23, 77), **Utrecht 0. Att:** 3,000.
Groningen 1 (Djurovski 51), **Sparta 0. Att:** 13,660.

ITALY Midweek

CUP SEMI-FINAL,1ST LEG
Parma 1, Sampdoria 0

PORTUGAL Weekend

Beira Mar 1, Chaves 0
Farense 3, Vitoria Guimaraes 0
Benfica 2, FC Porto 3
Salgueiros 1, Torreense 1
Penafiel 0, Maritimo 1
Uniao 1, Pacos Ferreira 2
Braga 1, Famalicao 0
Gil Vicente 0, Sporting 3
Boavista 5, Estoril 0

SCOTLAND Midweek

Airdrie 1 (Kirkwood 20), **Dundee United 0. Att:** 3,300.
Celtic 4 (Nicholas 8, McStay 12, Creaney 57, Miller 80), **Motherwell 1** (Arnott 9). **Att:** 15,521.
Aberdeen 2 (Ten Caat 37, Mason 86), **Hearts 0. Att:** 10,500.

Weekend
Aberdeen 0, Dundee United 2 (Ferreyre 45, McInally 83). **Att:** 10,500.
Airdrie 2 (Coyle 52, 64), **Falkirk 2** (McGivern 2, Cadette 7). **Att:** 4,500.
Hibernian 1 (Weir 53), **Hearts 2** (Hunter o.g. 40, I.Ferguson 75). **Att:** 13,776.
Rangers 0, Celtic 2 (Nicholas 34, Creaney 57). **Att:** 42,160.
St Johnstone 1 (Turner 72), **Dunfermline 0. Att:** 3,156.
St Mirren 1 (Hewitt 4), **Motherwell 2** (Jones 8, O'Donnell 58). Att; 2,090.

SPAIN Weekend

Barcelona 1 (Beguiristain 47), **Logrones 0. Att:** 75,000.
Real Madrid 1 (Hugo Sanchez 7), **La Coruna 0. Att:** 75,000.
Sporting Gijon 0, Albacete 2 (Zalazar 25, Antonio 80). **Att:** 19,000.
Sevilla 3 (Diego 7, Salguero pen 73, Petrovic 73), **Burgos 2** (Joseba Aquirre 65, Loren 86). **Att:** 30,000.
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Ciganda 11, 40), **Mallorca 0. Att:** 35,000.
Valladolid 0, Espanol 0. Att: 18,000.
Cadiz 0, Real Sociedad 0. Att: 10,000.
Tenerife 1 (Quique Estebaranz 78), **Zaragoza 0. Att:** 17,000.
Valencia 6 (Boro 9, Eloy 15, 76, Leonardo 21, Penev 47, 59), **Oviedo 3** (Sarriugarte 34, Bango 58, 60). **Att:** 40,000.
Osasuna 1 (Urban 66), **Atletico Madrid 1** (Manolo 48). **Att:** 13,000.

SWITZERLAND Weekend

Young Boys 0, Servette 0. Att: 4,600.
Lausanne Sports 2 (Douglas 9, Van den Boogaard pen 47), **St Gallen 1** (Zambrano 90). **Att:** 6,400.
Sion 1 (Rey 76), **FC Zurich 1** (Skoro 69). **Att:** 7,700.
Grasshoppers 0, Neuchatel Xamax 0. Att: 5,200.

WEEK ENDING, SUNDAY, MAR 29

AUSTRIA Weekend

CUP — 5TH ROUND
Baden 0, Austria Salzburg 4
Dornbirn 0, Stahl Linz 2
Vienna 2, Grazer AK 3
Austria Wien 3, St Polten 0
Admira Wacker 3, Vorwarts Steyr 0
Donaufeld 0, FC Tirol 1
FAVC 2, Rapid Wien 0

BELGIUM Weekend

Genk 0, FC Liege 0. Att: 5,000.
Anderlecht 7 (Bosman 10, 60, 70, Nilis 20, 22, 32 38), **Waregem 3** (Abeels 8, Dekenne 68, Vanhove 81). **Att:** 16,000.
Antwerp 2 (Czerniatynski 5, 90), **Charleroi 1** (Brogno 52). **Att:** 2,000.
Gent 1 (Balenga 46), **Mechelen 1** (Ingesson 40). **Att:** 7,500.
Standard 0, Cercle Brugge 0. Att: 13,000.
Lierse 5 (Rekdal 1, 43, pen 48, Simmes 63, Vandersmissen pen 82), **Ekeren 1** (Hofmans 60). **Att:** 5,500.
Kortrijk 0, Molenbeek 2 (Van Ankeren 8, Kepa 25). **Att:** 2,500.
Club Brugge 3 (Amokachi 34, Van der Elst 40, Booy 63), **Lokeren 1** (Myyry 51). **Att:** 8,000.
Aalst 0, Beveren 0. Att: 2,500.

ENGLAND Weekend

Aston Villa 1 (Regis 79), **Norwich City 0. Att:** 16,985.
Leeds United 0, West Ham United 0. Att: 31,101.
Manchester City 0, Chelsea 0. Att: 23,633.
Notts County 2 (Short 10, Wilson 40), **Crystal Palace 3** (Coleman 44, Bright 54, Mortimer 80). **Att:** 7,674.
Oldham Athletic 3 (Sharp 3, Jobson 55, Adams 65), **Sheffield Wednesday 0. Att:** 15,897.
QPR 0, Manchester United 0. Att: 22,603.
Sheffield United 2 (Deane 43, 70), **Liverpool 0. Att:** 26,943.
Tottenham Hotspur 4 (Durie 7, 44, 81, Lineker 32), **Coventry City 3** (Flynn 24, Smith 78, McGrath 85). **Att:** 22,744.
Wimbledon 1 (Earle 60), **Arsenal 3** (Parlour 1, Wright 7, Campbell 70). **Att:** 11,000.

FRANCE Weekend

Lens 0, Monaco 1 (Djorkaeff 64). **Att:** 28,000.
Sochaux 2 (Prat 8, 53), **Toulon 0. Att:** 3,500.
Nimes 0, Paris SG 1 (Perez 48). **Att:** 13,142.
Toulouse 1 (Pavon 62), **Lyon 0. Att:** 9,251.
Caen 3 (Paille 14, pen 26, Gravelaine 66), **Lille 3** (Brisson 42, Nielsen 47, Assadourian 50). **Att:** 6,388.
St Etienne 2 (Haon 24, Etienne Mendy 69), **Cannes 0. Att:** 10,028.
Metz 0, Rennes 0. Att: 5,563.
Auxerre 1 (Roche 80), **Montpellier 0. Att:** 9,000.
Nantes 0, Nancy 0. Att: 7,000.
Marseille 2 (Waddle 7, Papin 69), **Le Havre 0. Att:** 20,000.

GERMANY Weekend

MSV Duisburg 3 (Tonnies 21, 74, Steiniger 87), **Dynamo Dresden 0. Att:** 12,000.
Werder Bremen 2 (M. Bode 42, 84), **Fortuna D. 1** (Schuberth 82). **Att:** 9,800.
Wattenscheid 1 (Sane 48), **Koln 2** (Ordenewitz 30, 42). **Att:** 12,000.
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Lupescu 25, Kree pen 84), **VfL Bochum 0. Att:** 10,000.
Bayern Munich 1 (Mazinho 2), **Nurnberg 3** (Wuck 18, Zarate pen 42, 89). **Att:** 55,000.
Karlsruher SC1 (Cari 1), **Schalke 0. Att:** 21,000.
Borussia Dortmund 2 (Zorc 10, Poschner 51), **Eintracht Frankfurt 2** (Yeboah 4, Falkenmayer 55). **Att:** 52,616.
VfB Stuttgart 3 (F. Walter pen 14, 58, Gaudino 81), **Hamburg SV 2** (Eck 19, 85). **Att:** 22,000.
Borussia Mg. 1 (Criens 34), **Kaiserslautern 0. Att:** 18,000.
Hansa Rostock 2 (Schlunz 27, 51), **Stuttg. Kickers 2** (Kaim 49, Marin 76). **Att:** 5,000.

GREECE Weekend

Korinthos 2, Athinaikos 0
Serres 2, Xanthi 0
Pierikos 2, Ethnikos 0
Apollon 2, Doxa Drama 0
Larissa 1, Aris Salonika 0
PAOK 1, Panionios 0
Heraklis 0, AEK Athens 3
Olympiakos 0, OFI Crete 0
Panathinaikos 3, Panachaiki 1.

HOLLAND Weekend

Fortuna Sittard 0, Roda JC 1 (Ogechukwu 45). **Att:** 8,500.
De Graafschap 0, SVV/Dordrecht 0. Att: 7,3000.
MVV 1 (Lanckohr 5), **Willem II 1** (Sylia 83). **Att:** 3,500.
PSV 2 (Popescu 54, Romario 61), **Feyenoord 1** (Fraser 21). **Att:** 27,500.
RKC 2 (Van Hoogdalem 46, Brands 75), **Volendam 1** (De Leeuws 62). **Att:** 2,000.
Groningen 1 (Meijer 55), **Vitesse 2** (Van der Brom pen 89, Van Arum 90). **Att:** 14,355.

ITALY Weekend

Cremonese 3 (Dezotti pen 7, Florijancic 79, Marcolin 90), **Ascoli 1** (Benetti 71). **Att:** 6,000.
Cagliari 4 (Napoli 54, Francescoli 65, Fonseca 74, 89), **Fiorentina 0. Att:** 28,000.
Bari 1 (Platt pen 58), **Foggia 3** (Baiano 5, Signori 32, Kolyvanov 85). **Att:** 48,000.
Atalanta 1 (Caniggia 47), **Genoa 0. Att:** 18,000.
Juventus 1 (Schillaci 90), **Lazio 1** (Riedle 81). **Att:** 40,000.
AS Roma 1 (Rizzitelli 68), **AC Milan 1** (Simone 4). **Att:** 62,079.
Sampdoria 1 (Lanna 59), **Napoli 1** (Padovana 47). **Att:** 32,000.
Verona 1 (Renica 39), **Parma 0. Att:** 25,900.
Internazionale 0, Torino 0. Att: 40,000.

PORTUGAL Weekend

CUP — QUARTER-FINALS
Gil Vicente 0, Boavista 0
Benfica 6, Espinho 0
Leixoes 1, Penafiel 0

SCOTLAND Weekend

Aberdeen 1 (Irvine 62), **Airdrie 0. Att:** 7,000.
Celtic 3 (Creaney 10, Nicholas 58, Whyte 78), **Dundee United 1** (Ferguson 71). **Att:** 22,522.
Hearts 1 (Robertson 49), **Dunfermline 0. Att:** 7,488.
Motherwell 0, Falkirk 1 (McGivern 55). **Att:** 4,395.
St Johnstone 1 (Wright pen 78), **Rangers 2** (Hateley 37, 61). **Att:** 9,697.
St Mirren 0, Hibernian 1 (Evans 36). **Att:** 1,918.

SPAIN Weekend

La Coruna 2 (Albistegui 20, 40), **Logrones 2** (Antonio o.g. 9, Polster 25). **Att:** 20,000.
Albacete 1 (Corbalan 90), **Real Madrid 3** (Hierro 25, Hagi 54, Llorente 80). **Att:** 15,000.
Burgos 0, Sporting Gijon 1 (Monchu 19). **Att:** 10,000.
Mallorca 1 (Milojevic 32), **Sevilla 0. Att:** 3,000.
Espanol 2 (Kuznetsov pen 46, Mendiondo 87), **Athletic Bilbao 0. Att:** 30,000.
Real Sociedad 1 (Kodro 57), **Valladolid 0. Att:** 14,600.
Zaragoza 3 (Pena 13, 31, Gay 53), **Cadiz 0. Att:** 20,000.
Oviedo 2 (Vinals 24, Sarriugarte 67), **Tenerife 0. Att:** 17,206.
Atletico Madrid 1 (Manolo 61), **Valencia 0. Att:** 30,000.
Osasuna 0, Barcelona 0. Att: 25,000.

SWITZERLAND Weekend

CUP — 4TH ROUND
Lyss 0, Servette 1
C. Fribourg 0, Lausanne Sports 8
Fribourg 0, Young Boys 2
Saviese 1, Sion 5
Yverdon 1, Neuchatel Xamax 1
(Yverdon won on pens)
Maltey 2, La Chaux-de-Fonds 1
Berne 1, Aigle 0
Bellinzona 1, Lugano 2
Basel 0, St Gallen 0
(Basel won on pens)
Chur 0, Wettingen 0
(Wettingen won on pens)
Baden 2, FC Aarau 2
Tuggen 2, Old Boys 1
Schaffhausen 1, Grasshoppers 4
Kusnacht 1, Altstatten 1
(Kusnacht won on pens)
Wil 0, Kriens 2
Grenchen 0, FC Luzern 1

WEEK ENDING SUNDAY, APRIL 5

AUSTRIA Weekend

FC Tirol 0, Stahl Linz 1 (Metzier 16).
Rapid Wien 1 (Schotts 88).
Austria Wien 0.
Admira Wacker 2 (Artner 57, Ljung 76),
Vorwarts Steyr 1 (Novak 32).
St Polten 1 (Rotter 32), **Austria Salzburg 2** (Keglevits 2, Willfurth 90).

BELGIUM Weekend

Charleroi 3 (Brogno 14, 85, Monnens 83), **Kortrijk 1** (Hofkens 21). **Att:** 3,000.
Molenbeek 2 (De Vriese 48, Wawa 87), **Anderlecht 1** (Bosman 13). **Att:** 12,000.
Waregem 2 (Dekenne 37, Blancke 42), **Aalst 1** (Krohn 88). **Att:** 2,000.
Beveren 3 (Lodders 40, Massagie 58, Vanvossen 73), **Lierse 2** (Rekoul 10, 50). **Att:** 8,000.
Ekeren 0, Club Brugge 1 (Booy 17). **Att:** 8,000.
Lokeren 0, FC Liege 0. Att: 3,000.
Cercle Brugge 1 (Tipuric 62), **Gent 1** (Vandenbergh). **Att:** 4,000.
Mechelen 0, Antwerp 0. Att: 9,100.
Standard 3 (Van Rooy 58, Nettagno 63, Asselmans 72), **Genk 2** (Van der Elst 43, Vandeurzen 47). **Att:** 18,000.

ENGLAND Midweek

Arsenal 3 (Dixon pen 5, Merson 85, Chettle 90 o.g.), **Nottm. Forest 2** (Clough 44, Keane 69). **Att:** 27,036.
Aston Villa 1 (Regis 89), **Sheffield United 1** (Gage 79). **Att:** 15,745.
Liverpool 4 (Thomas 13, MacManaman 34, Rush 58, Venison 76), **Notts County 0. Att:** 25,457.
Norwich 1 (Power 61), **Manchester United 3** (Ince 41, 59, McClair 66). **Att:** 17,489.
Everton 0, Southampton 1 (Cockerill 25). **Att:** 15,201.
Tottenham 3 (Lineker 16, 52, pen 59), **West Ham 0. Att:** 31,809.
Wimbledon 3 (Earle 30, Fashanu 35, 71), **Nottm. Forest 0. Att:** 3,542.

Weekend

Chelsea 2 (Wise 26, Cascarino 48), **West Ham 1** (Allen 27). **Att:** 20,684.
Coventry 0, Arsenal 1 (Campbell 28). **Att:** 14,133.
Crystal Palace 2 (Coleman 65, Bright 71), **Everton 0. Att:** 114,338.
Luton 2 (Varadi 27, Preece 64), **Wimbledon 1** (Fashanu 6). **Att:** 7,754.
Manchester City 4 (Hill 11, Sheron 33, Quinn 62, Brennan 89), **Leeds United 0. Att:** 30,239.
Nottm. Forest 0, Sheffield Wed 2 (Williams 30, Hirst 42). **Att:** 26,105.
Sheffield Utd 2 (Whitehouse 22, Bryson 81), **Oldham 0. Att:** 19,843.
Southampton 2 (Dowie 13, Shearer pen 68), **QPR 1** (Ferdinand 62). **Att:** 15,025.
Tottenham 2 (Lineker 6, Teale 13 o.g.),

CONTINUED OVER

Aston Villa 5 (Richardson 20, Olney 31, Yorke 58, Daley 86, Regis 90). **Att:** 26,370.

FA CUP — SEMI-FINALS
Liverpool 1 (Whelan 116), **Portsmouth 1** (Anderton 108). **Att:** 41,869 *(at Highbury).*
Norwich 0, Sunderland 1 (Byrne 34).
Att: 40,102 *(at Hillsborough).*

FRANCE Weekend

Nancy 1 (Tarasiewicz 9), **Marseille 3** (Pele 23, Durand 42, Angloma 46). **Att:** 17,152.
Monaco 2 (Djorkaeff 15, 39), **Auxerre 0.**
Att: 5,000.
Paris SG 2 (Le Guen 22, Perez 65),
Sochaux 0. Att: 22,431.
Montpellier 2 (Divert 69, 73),
St Etienne 0. Att: 10,000.
Toulon 0, Caen 0. **Att:** 4,000.
Le Havre 1 (Garande pen 59), **Nantes 1** (Ferri 82). **Att:** 7,821.
Lille 3 (M. Nielsen 10, Frandsen 19, Assadourian 90), **Toulouse 1** (Debeve 90).
Att: 7,456.
Cannes 2 (Priou pen 30, 67), **Lens 1** (Delmotte 78). **Att:** 4,500.
Lyon 0, Metz 0. Att: 11,483.
Rennes 1 (Shala 15), **Nimes 1** (Bernardet 57). **Att:** 7,122.

GERMANY Midweek

Wattenscheid 3 (Tschiskale 19, 26, Bach 42), **Dynamo Dresden 0. Att:** 6,000.

Weekend

VfL Bochum 2 (Woelk 8 o.g., Wegmann 9), **MSV Duisburg 1** (Tonnies 51). **Att:** 20,000.
Nurnberg 2 (Zarate 12 pen, Wuck 28),
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Chapuisat 34).
Att: 48,500.
Dynamo Dresden 2 (Melzig 78, Zander 90), **Karlsruher SC 0. Att:** 12,000.
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Sippel 58), **VfB Stuttgart 1** (Kastl 45). **Att:** 47,000.
Schalke 0, Werder Bremen 0.
Att: 40,100.
Fortuna D. 0, Hansa Rostock 0.
Att: 6,000.
Koln 1 (Giske 8), **Bayer Leverkusen 1** (Nehl 69). **Att:** 23,000.
Stutt. Kickers 2 (Moutas 98, Kula 53),
Bayern Munich 4 (Wohlfarth 21, Mazinho 38, Labbadia 55, Sternkopf 80).
Att: 21,000.
Kaiserslautern 3 (Hoffman 7, Degen 9, Kuntz 28), **Wattenscheid 2** (Prinzen 15, Fink 72). **Att:** 32,000.
Hamburg SV 1 (Eck 8), **Borussia Mg. 0.**
Att: 25,800.

HOLLAND Weekend

Volendam 2 (Berghuis 26, Verdeek 50),
Groningen 0. Att: 6,501.
Feyenoord 0, RKC Waalwijk 0.
Att: 11,678.
MVV 1 (Meijer 15), **PSV 1** (Kieft 10).
Att: 11,500.
Willem II 2 (Van Geel 15, 72), **Ajax 4** (Alflen 12, Van Loen 35, Petterson 77, Bergkamp 90). **Att:** 13,000.
Den Haag 0, Sparta Rotterdam 0.
Att: 4,000.
Roda JC 1 (Arnold 68), **Twente 1** (Gaasbeek 78). **Att:** 3,500.
VVV 1 (Haan 71), **Fortuna Sittard 4** (Gansen 4, Boogers 57, 89, Mordang 75).
Att: 3,000.
SVV/Dordrecht 1 (Gorre 57), **Utrecht 2** (Liesdek 53, Bijl pen 66). **Att:** 1,075.
Vitesse Arnhem 1 (Loeffen 31), **De Graafschap 0. Att:** 8,051.

ITALY Weekend

Ascoli 1 (Bierhoff 13), **Inter Milan 2** (Klinsmann 25, 75). **Att:** 11,471.
Milan 5 (Rijkaard 34, Evani 53, Van Basten 61, Massaro 81, Albertini 88), **Sampdoria 1** (Vialli 87). **Att:** 73,947.
Torino 2 (Casagrande 66, 72), **Juventus 0. Att:** 45,490.
Genoa 1 (Branco 22), **Verona 0.**
Att: 26,201.
Foggia 2 (Signori 23, Kolyvanov 49),
Cremonese 0. Att: 20,221.
Fiorentina 3 (Orlando 35, Batistuta 45, 90),
Atalanta 0. Att: 24,621.
Lazio 3 (Riedle 18, Sosa 21, 51), **Bari 1** (Cucchi 35). **Att:** 32,926.
Parma 1 (Agostini 43), **Cagliari 1** (Herrera 7). **Att:** 22,016.
Napoli 3 (Silenzi 47, Careca 55, Zola 71),
AS Roma 2 (Voller 8, Giannini 17).
Att: 45,589.

PORTUGAL Weekend

Sporting Lisbon 0, Guimaraes 1 (Ziad 79). **Att:** 30,000.
Estoril 0, Gil Vicente 1 (Capucho 44).
Att: 6,000.
Torriense 1 (Evandro 89), **Boavista 0.**
Att: 10,000.
Maritimo 1 (Heitor 5), **Salgueiros 1** (Drajkovic 30). **Att:** 5,000.
Pacos Ferreira 2 (Spassov 20, Julian 30),
Penafiel 1 (Valtinho 21). **Att:** 8,000.
Chaves 0, Uniao 2 (S. Lavos 33, Lepi 90).
Att: 6,000.
FC Porto 4 (Joao Pinto pen 17, Kostadinov 27, 49, Magalhaes 66), **Beira-Mar 1** (Petrov 59). **Att:** 5,000.
Famalicao 0, Benfica 0. Att: 15,000.
Sp. Braga 4 (Moroni 12, Forbs 45, Abel Campos 80, Nando 90), **Farense 1** (Hugo 89). **Att:** 12,000.

SCOTLAND Midweek

CUP — SEMI-FINAL
Celtic 0, Rangers 1 (McCoist 45).
Att: 45,191 *(at Hampden Park).*

Weekend — League

Aidrie v St Mirren — *postponed*
Dundee United 2 (Cleland 29, Bowman 53), **St Johnstone 1** (Wright 13).
Att: 5,553.
Dunfermline 0, Aberdeen 0. Att: 3,033.
Falkirk 0, Celtic 3 (Creaney 24, Nicholas 61, Collins 81). **Att:** 9,000.
Hibernian 0, Motherwell 0. Att: 4,437.
Rangers v Hearts — *postponed*

CUP — SEMI-FINAL
Airdrie 0, Hearts 0. Att: 27,310
(at Hampden Park).

SPAIN Weekend

Barcelona 4 (Stoichkov 8, J. Salinas 62, 79, Bakero 84), **La Coruna 1** (Djukic 29).
Att: 6,000.
Logrones 1 (Polster 85), **Albacete 1** (Salazar 43). **Att:** 11,000.
Real Madrid 2 (Lasa 12, Hierro 71),
Burgos 0. Att: 90,000.
Sporting Gijon 2 (Luhovy 86, 90),
Mallorca 0. Att: 16,000.
Sevilla 2 (Diego 8, Suker 15), **Espanol 1** (Francisco 30). **Att:** 25,000.
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Ciganda 64, Garitano pen 80), **Real Sociedad 1** (P. Salinas o.g. 2). **Att:** 36,000.
Valladolid 0, Real Zaragoza 0.
Att: 17,000.
Cadiz 3 (Tilico 32, 48, Quico 86), **Oviedo 1** (Jankovic 70). **Att:** 10,000.
Tenerife 0, Atletico Madrid 1 (Vizcaino 28). **Att:** 20,000.
Valencia 1 (Eloy 87), **Osasuna 2** (Urban pen 77, Merino 90). **Att:** 7,000.

SWITZERLAND Weekend

Servette 3 (Dobrovolski 11, Schepull 20, Sinval 74), **FC Zurich 3** (Milton 25, Germann 40, Di Matteo pen 77). **Att:** 4,200.
Neuchatel 3 (Chassot 22, Bonvin 41, Wyss o.g. 73), **St Gallen 1** (Besio 26).
Att: 7,800.
FC Zurich 0, Young Boys 3 (Streun 36, Christensen 51, Kunz 68). **Att:** 3,500.
Sion 1 (Fournier 49), **Lausanne 0.**
Att: 12,100.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Mar 4 = San Jose — intl friendly
Costa Rica 2 (Montero 54pen, Gonzalez 89)
El Salvador 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,938. **Ref:** Olida (CR)
Costa Rica: Hidalgo — Myers, Gonzalez, Montero, Berry — Marchena, Guillen (Rone 66), Guthrie (Arguedas 88), Gomez — Coronado (Flores 85), Diaz (Smith 68).
El Salvador: Garcia — Rivera (Abrego 63), Trigueros, Meza, Estrada — Castro, Lazo*, Menjivar, Palacios — Coreas (Vazquez 56), Guerrero.
*Lazo sent off.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Mar 8 = Mexico City — intl friendly
Mexico 4 (Aguirre 7, Valdez 37, De la Torre 57 pen, Bernal 85)
CIS 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 34,000.
Mexico: Campos — Gutierrez, Aguirre, Ramirez Perales (Vazquez), Ramirez — De la Torre (Bernal), Espana, Farfan (Espinoza), A Garcia — Valdez (Ordiales), L Garcia.
CIS: Kharin — Losev, Arifulin, Sabitov (Filiminov), Somatov — Nikitin (Kuzmichev), Gorkov, Alenichev (Fedin), Terekhov (Rouchkov) — Smirnov, Sergeyev.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

Mar 11 = Tampico — intl friendly
Mexico 1 (L Garcia 5)
CIS 1 (Smirnov 59)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 23,000.
Mexico: *Ramirez sent off.
CIS: Samatov, Podpalov sent off.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

Mar 25 = Paris — intl friendly
France 3 (Jean-Pierre Papin 41, 84, Pascal Vahirua 44)
Belgium 3 (Philippe Albert 28, Enzo Scifo 43pen, Marc Wilmots 47)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Don (Eng)
France: Martini — Sauzee (Amoros 63), Boli, Casoni, Petit (Durand 46), Perez, Deschamps, Angloma, Cantona, Papin, Vahirua (Fernandez 46).
Belgium: Preud'homme — Crasson, Grun, Van der Elst, Albert, Borkelmans — Scifo, Walem, Boffin (Bruno Versavel 59) — Degryse (Dauwen 89), Nilis (Wilmots 46).

● French manager Michel Platini used this match for a few experiments at the back and in midfeld and nearly paid a heavy price in a fast, entertaining game which the Belgians dominated for long periods. In the end it took a marvellously spectacular overhead effort from Papin to save the day for the hosts.

Mar 25 = Amsterdam — intl friendly
Holland 2 (Wim Kieft 62, Jan Wouters 67)
Yugoslavia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Muhmenthaler (Swz)
Holland: Menzo — Blind, R Koeman (Van Aerle 46), Van Tiggelen, Richard Witschge, Wouters, Van't Schip, Rijkaard (Winter 67), Kieft (Bosz 84), Van Vossen, Rob Witschge.
Yugoslavia: Omerovic — Stanojkovic, Vujacic, Jugovic, Hadzibegic, Najdoski (Novak 62), Bazdareviv, Savicevic (Mijatovic 17), Kodro, Stojkovic (Milanic 46), Brnovic.

● Neither nation was at full strength but the Slavs, at least, would have been just glad to get any sort of team onto the pitch. Holland missed the injured Van Basten, Gullit and Bergkamp while the Slavs presented their new-look Serbian team lacking the secessionists of Croatia and Slovenia (Boban, Jarni, Boksic, Ivkovic, Prosinecki, Katanec, etc). Kieft had a seventh-minute goal disallowed for a push but he made amends in the 62nd, when he headed home a Rob Witschge free kick. Five minutes later Wouters shot No 2 after a mix-up in the Slav defence.

Mar 25 = Budapest — intl friendly
Hungary 2 (Jozsef Kiprich 65, Kalman Kovacs 70)
Austria 1 (Toni Polster 40)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,500. **Ref:** Listkiewicz (Pol)
Hungary: Petry — Telek, Lorincz, Keller, Simon, Detari, Eszenyi (Vincze 46), Lipcsei (Balog 61), Ervin Kovacs, Kiprich (Illes 89), Kalman Kovacs (Fisher 90).
Austria: Konsel — Zsak, Schottel, Rotter (Lainer 81), Prosenik, Stoger, Hormann (Artner 75), Herzog (Schinkels 72), Hartmann (Pfeifenberger 85), Andy Ogris, Polster.

● Polster supplied visiting Austria with a surprise half-time lead in this latest act in the oldest international fixture of continental Europe. But Hungary, now managed by ex-Romania boss Emerich Jenei, took control after the break. Lajos Detari, outstanding in midfield, equalised with a header. Then substitute Vincze escaped a posse of defenders to lay on the winner for Kalman Kovacs. The introduction of Vincze, for the second half, was a key factor in the Hungarians' improvement.

Mar 25 = Delle Alpi, Turin — intl friendly
Italy 1 (Roberto Baggio 86 pen)
Germany 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 342,500. **Ref:** Larsson (Swe).
Italy: Zenga — Mannini, Carbone, De Napoli (Lentini 60), Costacurta, Baresi, Eranio (Bianchi 80), Donadoni, Casiraghi, Baggio (Berti 89), Evani.
Germany: Illgner — Reuter, Brehme (Schulz 46), Helmer, Binz, Buchwald, Doll (Bein 69), Matthaus, Hassler, Voller (Klinsmann 46), Riedle.

● A late, controversial penalty converted by Baggio brought the Italians a welcome victory (**see Special Report on Pages 18, 19**).

Mar 25 = Prague — intl friendly
Czechoslovakia 2 (Tomas Skuhravy 21, Vaclav Nemecek 59)
England 2 (Paul Merson 28, Martin Keown 66)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Kapl (Aus).
Czechoslovakia: Miklosko — Chovanec — Glonek, Kadlec — Hapal, Nemecek (Nemec 82), Kubik, Kula (Frydek 86), Bilek, Shukravy, Knoflicek (Siegl 89).
England: Seaman — Keown, Walker, Mabbutt (Lineker 72), Pearce, Rocastle (Dixon 46), Platt, Clough (Stewart 46), Barnes (Dorigo 52), Merson, Hateley.

● England flew home with an honourable draw but more worries over the No 2 goalkeeping slot after another unhappy international for David Seaman. Frantisek Chovanec, back for Czechoslovakia, quickly resumed his productive partnership with Skuhravy, laying on the Genoa striker's opening goal. A Czechoslovak slip-up let in Merson for an equaliser. Then, in the second half, a messy goal from a Chovanec corner restored the hosts' advantage. It took a fine strike from Keown, his first international goal, to pull England all-square.

Mar 25 = Luxembourg — intl friendly
Luxembourg 2 (Jean-Paul Girres 24, Thomas Wolf 45)
Turkey 3 (Unal 8, Hami 15, 66)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Schelings (Bel)
Luxembourg: Van Rijswijck — Bossi, Birsens, Petry, Wolf, Girres (Ganser 83), Holtz, Weis, Groff, Langers (Malget 73), Theis (Morocutt 68).
Turkey: Engin — Riza, Bulent, Gokhan, Tugay, Ogun (Orhan 75), Hakan, Unal, Mohammed. Oguz (Recep 46), Hami (Orhan 75).

● Two goals from Hami Mandirali proved just enough to keep Turkey in the driving seat.

Mar 25 = Limassol — intl friendly
Cyprus 1 (Larku 82)
Greece 2 (Tursunidis 7, Karapialis 32)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 2,500. **Ref:** Jakub (Isr)
Cyprus: Christofi (Onisiforu 46) — Panaghi, Pittas, K Constantinu, Nikolau, G Constantinu (Costas 46), Andreu (Larku 63), Sava (Hatzilukas 46), Sotiru, Papavasiliu (Ilia 67), Charalabus.
Greece: Papadopulos (Chaniotakis 56) — Kolitsidakis, Karagiannis, Manolas (Kalitzakis 46), Mitsibonas, Tsaluhidis, Tursunidis (Marinakis 71), Borbokis, Dimitriadis (Donis 46), Karapialis (Agoroyiannis 63), Tsantakis.

● Cyprus gave Greece a late scare. The Greeks had more than enough chances to have wrapped up the match in the first half.

Mar 25 = Katowice — intl friendly
Poland 2 (Kraus 40, Lesiak 43)
Lithuania 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Rudy (Pol)
Poland: Bobrowicz (Matysek 46) — Rzepka, R Szewczyk, Jegor, Lesiak (Fedoruk 46) — Grembocki, Skrzypczak (Janik 46), J Gora, Grzesik (Ledwon 60) — Kraus, Sliwowski (Jedraszczyk 46).
Lithuania: Stauce (Poskus 84) — Mitka, Vainoras, Graziunas, Statkievicius — Zdanicius (Ramelis 46), Danisevicius (Urbanas 46), Baranauskas, Zuta — Fridrikas (Vitkovskas 46), Knitkauskas (Pocius 68).

● Lithuania made a useful-looking return to the international arena after 50 years, even if Poland put out far less than a full-strength team.

Mar 25 = Dublin — intl friendly
Rep Ireland 2 (Tommy Coyne 27, John Aldridge 88 pen)
Switzerland 1 (Ronnie Whelan o.g. 25)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 23,000. **Ref:** Dominguez (US)
Rep Ireland: Bonner — Morris, O'Leary (O'Brien 46), McGrath, Phelan, McGoldrick (Daish 46), Whelan, Keane (Aldridge 83), Staunton (Sheedy 56), Cascarino, Coyne.
Switzerland: Brunner (Pascolo 40) — Geiger, Bickel (Heldmann 66), Egli, Schepull, Gamperle, Piffaretti, Ohrel (Rothenbuhler 54), A Sutter, Chapuisat (Dietlin 84), Turkyilmaz.

● A dreadful pitch produced a poor match. Whelan marked his international return after a 17-month absence with an early own goal. But Tommy Coyne produced a debut equaliser less than two minutes later. Two minutes from time O'Brien was brought down by Gamperle and Aldridge struck home the penalty.

Mar 25 = Hampden Park, Glasgow — intl friendly
Scotland 1 (Paul McStay 24)
Finland 1 (Jari Litmanen 41)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 9,275. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe).
Scotland: Goram — McKimmie, Boyd, Bowman, McPherson, Malpas, Strachan (McAllister 65), McStay, David Robertson (McCoist 54), Collins, Durie.
Finland: Huttunen — Rinne (Nyysonnen 80), Heikkinen, Petaja, Anders Eriksson, Remes, Litmanen, Myyry, Jarvinen, Tarkkio (Vanhala 69), Paatelainen.

● Scotland's last home game before the European finals was hardly reassuring. Finland outplayed them for much of the time and McStay's opening goal — created by debutant Dave Bowman of Dundee United — was against the run of play. Finland deserved their equaliser, just

Action in Paris as France draw 3-3 with Belgium.

Action in Prague as Czechoslovakia draw 2-2 with England

before the interval. Indeed, soon after half-time they might have snatched a winner had Goram not leaped for an athletic save

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Mar 28 = San Juan — WC CONCACAF qual
Puerto Rico 1 (Franco Paonesa 6)
Dominican Rep. 1 (Dinardo Rodriguez 4)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 300.

● Puerto Rico qualified to face Jamaica in the preliminary round. The winners of that tie will face Barbados or Trinidad/Tobago in the first round proper.

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

Mar 29 = Kingstown, St Vincent — WC CONCACAF qual
St Vincent 3 (Curtis Joseph 30, Rodney Jack 56, Alphonsus Brown 66)
St Lucia 1 (Earl Jean 22)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 5,000.

● St Vincent won 3-2 on aggregate to earn a bye against withdrawn Cuba in the preliminary round. They will now play Guyana or Surinam in the first round.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

Apr 8 = Bucharest — intl friendly
Romania 2 (Pavel Badea 4, Dan Petrescu 51)
Latvia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000.

● Latvia achieved an honourable result on their first full international outing for 52 years. "This was a great patriotic moment for us," said Latvia manager Janis Gilis after the Romanian crowd stood in honour of the Latvian anthem. Romania won comparatively easily to celebrate the return to the fold of sweeper Miodrag Belodedic. He had not been back — let alone played for Romania — since seeking asylum from the Ceascescu regime in Belgrade in December, 1988.

Apr 8 = Ankara — intl friendly
Turkey 2 (Hami 35, Hakan 88)
Denmark 1 (Christiansen 75)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000.

OTHER MATCHES

Mar 24
(Budejovice): Czechoslovakia B 0, England B 1 (Smith).
(Tolka Park, Dublin): Rep Ireland U21 1 (Studer o.g.), Switzerland U21 1 (Hohener).

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP
Quarter-finals, second legs
Scotland 4, Germany 3 (5-4 agg); Italy 2, Czechoslovakia 0 (4-1 agg); Poland 1, Denmark 1 (1-6 agg); Sweden 1, Holland 0 (2-2 agg; Sweden on away goal)

1994 WORLD CUP FIXTURES

EUROPE

38 entries (39 members, Liechtenstein withdrew)

● *Top two teams in each Group qualify for finals (Germany qualify as holders).*

GROUP 1
Italy, Scotland, Portugal, Switzerland, Malta, Estonia.
16.08.92 Estonia v Switzerland
09.09.92 Switzerland v Scotland
14.10.92 Italy v Switzerland
14.10.92 Scotland v Portugal
25.10.92 Malta v Estonia
18.11.92 Scotland v Italy
18.11.92 Switzerland v Malta
19.12.92 Malta v Italy
24.01.93 Malta v Portugal
17.02.93 Scotland v Malta
24.02.93 Portugal v Italy
24.03.93 Italy v Malta
31.03.93 Switzerland v Portugal
14.04.93 Italy v Estonia
17.04.93 Malta v Switzerland
28.04.93 Portugal v Scotland
01.05.93 Switzerland v Italy
12.05.93 Estonia v Malta
19.05.93 Estonia v Scotland
02.06.93 Scotland v Estonia
19.06.93 Portugal v Malta
05.09.93 Estonia v Portugal
08.09.93 Scotland v Switzerland
22.09.93 Estonia v Italy
13.10.93 Portugal v Switzerland
13.10.93 Italy v Scotland
10.11.93 Portugal v Estonia
17.11.93 Italy v Portugal
17.11.93 Malta v Scotland
17.11.93 Switzerland v Estonia

GROUP 2
England, Holland, Poland, Norway, Turkey, San Marino.
09.09.92 Norway v San Marino
23.09.92 Norway v Holland
23.09.92 Poland v Turkey
07.10.92 San Marino v Norway
14.10.92 England v Norway
14.10.92 Holland v Poland
28.10.92 Turkey v San Marino
18.11.92 England v Turkey
16.12.92 Turkey v Holland
17.02.93 England v San Marino
24.02.93 Holland v Turkey
10.03.93 San Marino v Turkey
24.03.93 Holland v San Marino
31.03.93 Turkey v England
28.04.93 England v Holland
28.04.93 Norway v Turkey
28.04.93 Poland v San Marino
19.05.93 San Marino v Poland
29.05.93 Poland v England
02.06.93 Norway v England
09.06.93 Holland v Norway
08.09.93 England v Poland
22.09.93 Norway v Poland
22.09.93 San Marino v Holland
13.10.93 Holland v England
13.10.93 Poland v Norway
27.10.93 Turkey v Poland
10.11.93 Turkey v Norway
16.11.93 San Marino v England
17.11.93 Poland v Holland

GROUP 3
Spain, Republic of Ireland, Denmark, Northern Ireland, Albania, Lithuania, Latvia.
22.04.92 Spain v Albania
28.04.92 Northern Ireland v Lithuania
26.05.92 Rep. of Ireland v Albania
03.06.92 Albania v Lithuania
12.08.92 Latvia v Lithuania
26.08.92 Latvia v Denmark
09.09.92 Iceland v Latvia
09.09.92 Northern Ireland v Albania
23.09.92 Latvia v Spain
23.09.92 Lithuania v Denmark
14.10.92 Denmark v Rep. of Ireland
14.10.92 Northern Ireland v Spain
28.10.92 Lithuania v Latvia
11.11.92 Albania v Latvia
18.11.92 Northern Ireland v Denmark
18.11.92 Spain v Rep. of Ireland
16.12.92 Spain v Latvia
17.02.93 Albania v Northern Ireland
24.02.93 Spain v Lithuania
31.03.93 Denmark v Spain
31.03.93 Rep. of Ireland v Northern Ireland
14.04.93 Denmark v Latvia
14.04.93 Lithuania v Albania
28.04.93 Rep. of Ireland v Denmark
28.04.93 Spain v Northern Ireland
15.05.93 Latvia v Albania
25.05.93 Lithuania v Northern Ireland
26.05.93 Albania v Rep. of Ireland
02.06.93 Denmark v Albania
02.06.93 Latvia v Northern Ireland
02.06.93 Lithuania v Spain
09.06.93 Latvia v Rep. of Ireland
16.06.93 Lithuania v Rep. of Ireland
25.08.93 Denmark v Lithuania
08.09.93 Albania v Denmark
08.09.93 Rep. of Ireland v Lithuania
08.09.93 Northern Ireland v Latvia
22.09.93 Albania v Spain
13.10.93 Denmark v Northern Ireland
13.10.93 Rep. of Ireland v Spain
17.11.93 Northern Ireland v Rep. of Ireland
17.11.93 Spain v Denmark

GROUP 4
Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Wales, Cyprus, Faroe Islands.
22.04.92 Belgium v Cyprus
06.05.92 Romania v Faroe Islands
20.05.92 Romania v Wales
03.06.92 Faroe Islands v Belgium
17.06.92 Faroe Islands v Cyprus
02.09.92 Czechoslovakia v Belgium
09.09.92 Wales v Faroe Islands
23.09.92 Czechoslovakia v Faroe Islands
14.10.92 Belgium v Romania
14.10.92 Cyprus v Wales
14.11.92 Romania v Czechoslovakia
18.11.92 Wales v Belgium
29.11.92 Cyprus v Romania
02.01.93 Cyprus v Belgium
24.03.93 Cyprus v Czechoslovakia
31.03.93 Belgium v Wales
14.04.93 Romania v Cyprus
25.04.93 Cyprus v Faroe Islands
28.04.93 Czechoslovakia v Wales
22.05.93 Belgium v Faroe Islands
02.06.93 Czechoslovakia v Romania
06.06.93 Faroe Islands v Wales
16.06.93 Faroe Islands v Czechoslovakia
08.09.93 Wales v Czechoslovakia
08.09.93 Faroe Islands v Romania
13.10.93 Romania v Belgium
13.10.93 Wales v Cyprus
27.10.93 Czechoslovakia v Cyprus
17.11.93 Wales v Romania
17.11.93 Belgium v Czechoslovakia

GROUP 5
CIS, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Greece, Iceland, Luxembourg.
13.05.92 Greece v Iceland
03.06.92 Hungary v Iceland
02.09.92 Iceland v Yugoslavia
09.09.92 Luxembourg v Hungary
23.09.92 Yugoslavia v CIS
07.10.92 Iceland v Greece
14.10.92 CIS v Iceland
14.10.92 Hungary v Yugoslavia
28.10.92 CIS v Luxembourg
11.11.92 Greece v Hungary
15.11.92 Luxembourg v Yugoslavia
17.02.93 Greece v Luxembourg
31.03.93 Hungary v Greece
31.03.93 Yugoslavia v Luxembourg
14.04.93 Luxembourg v CIS
28.04.93 CIS v Hungary
28.04.93 Yugoslavia v Greece
20.05.93 CIS v Greece
20.05.93 Luxembourg v Iceland
02.06.93 Iceland v CIS
16.06.93 Iceland v Hungary
22.08.93 Yugoslavia v Iceland
08.09.93 Hungary v CIS
08.09.93 Iceland v Luxembourg
06.10.93 CIS v Yugoslavia
12.10.93 Luxembourg v Greece
27.10.93 Greece v Yugoslavia
27.10.93 Hungary v Luxembourg
17.11.93 Greece v CIS
17.11.93 Yugoslavia v Hungary

GROUP 6
France, Austria, Sweden, Bulgaria, Finland, Israel.
14.05.92 Finland v Bulgaria
09.09.92 Bulgaria v France
09.09.92 Finland v Sweden
07.10.92 Sweden v Bulgaria
14.10.92 France v Austria
28.10.92 Austria v Israel
11.11.92 Israel v Sweden
14.11.92 France v Finland
02.12.92 Israel v Bulgaria
17.02.93 Israel v France
27.03.93 Austria v France
14.04.93 Austria v Bulgaria
28.04.93 France v Sweden
28.04.93 Bulgaria v Finland
12.05.93 Bulgaria v Israel
13.05.93 Finland v Austria
19.05.93 Sweden v Austria
02.06.93 Sweden v Israel
16.06.93 Finland v Israel
22.08.93 Sweden v France
25.08.93 Austria v Finland
08.09.93 Finland v France
08.09.93 Bulgaria v Sweden
13.10.93 France v Israel
13.10.93 Bulgaria v Austria
13.10.93 Sweden v Finland
27.20.93 Israel v Austria
10.11.93 Austria v Sweden
10.11.93 Israel v Finland
17.11.93 France v Bulgaria

CONCACAF

23 entries (27 members, Cuba withdrew)

● *Winners of Group A play (home & away) against winners of Group B. Winning nation qualifies for finals. Runners-up play Oceania winners for right to play South America Group A runners-up for a place in the finals (United States qualify as hosts).*

Pre-preliminary Round
CARIBBEAN REGION — NORTH
21.03.92 Dominican Rep. v Puerto Rico 1-2
22.03.92 St Lucia v St Vincent 1-0
29.03.92 Puerto Rico v Dominican Rep. 1-1
29.03.92 St Vincent v St Lucia 3-1

Preliminary Round
CARIBBEAN REGION — NORTH
Bermuda v Haiti, Puerto Rico v Jamaica, St Vincent v Grenadines.

CARIBBEAN REGION — SOUTH
Dutch Antilles v Antigua, Guyana v Surinam, Barbados v Trinidad & Tobago.

First Round
CENTRAL REGION: Guatemala v Honduras, Panama v Costa Rica, Nicaragua v El Salvador

CARIBBEAN REGION: Guyana or Surinam v St Vincent or Grenadines, Bermuda or Haiti v Dutch Antilles or Antigua, Barbados or Trinidad & Tobago v Puerto Rico or Jamaica.

Second Round
GROUP A: Mexico and 3 First Round qualifiers.
GROUP B: Canada and 3 first Round qualifiers.

SOUTH AMERICAN RESULTS AND TABLES

1992 LIBERTADORES CUP

FIRST ROUND

GROUP 1
(Chile — Argentina)
18.02.92 Colo Colo (Chi) v Coquimbo (Chi) 1-0
21.02.92 Colo Colo v Univ. Catolica (Chi) 1-1
26.02.92 Coquimbo v Univ. Catolica 3-2
26.02.92 Newell's (Arg) v San Lorenzo (Arg) 0-6
03.03.92 Newell's v Coquimbo 3-0
03.03.92 San Lorenzo v Colo Colo 1-0
06.03.92 Newell's v Colo Colo 3-1
06.03.92 San Lorenzo v Coquimbo 3-0
09.03.92 Univ. Catolica v Newell's 1-1
13.03.92 Univ. Catolica v San Lorenzo 4-0
17.03.92 Coquimbo v Colo Colo 1-1
20.03.92 Univ. Catolica v Colo Colo 0-0
25.03.92 Univ. Catolica v Coquimbo 5-1
25.03.92 San Lorenzo v Newell's 0-1
31.03.92 Coquimbo v Newell's 1-2
31.03.92 Colo Colo v San Lorenzo 1-0
03.04.92 Coquimbo v San Lorenzo 0-1
03.04.92 Colo Colo v Newell's 1-1
07.04.92 San Lorenzo v Univ. Catolica 2-2
10.04.92 Newell's v Univ. Catolica 0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Newell's	8	4	3	1	11	10	11
Univ. Catolica	8	2	5	1	15	8	9
San Lorenzo	8	4	1	3	13	8	9
Colo Colo	8	2	4	2	6	7	8
Coquimbo	8	1	1	6	6	18	3

GROUP 2
(Bolivia — Brazil)
06.03.92 Criciuma (Bra) v Sao Paulo (Bra) 3-0
06.03.92 Bolivar (Bol) v San Jose (Bol) 2-1
17.03.92 San Jose v Sao Paulo 0-3
20.03.92 Bolivar v Sao Paulo 1-1
24.02.92 San Jose v Criciuma 1-2
27.03.92 Bolivar v Criciuma 1-1
02.04.92 Sao Paulo v Criciuma 4-0
02.04.92 San Jose v Bolivar 2-4
07.04.92 Sao Paulo v San Jose 1-1
10.04.92 Criciuma v San Jose 5-0
14.04.92 Sao Paulo v Bolivar
18.04.92 Criciuma v Bolivar

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Criciuma	5	3	1	1	11	6	7
Sao Paolo	5	2	2	1	9	5	6
Bolivar	4	2	2	0	8	5	6
San Jose	6	0	1	4	5	12	1

GROUP 3
(Ecuador — Venezuela)
23.02.92 Maritimo (Ven) v ULA (Ven) 1-2
23.02.92 Barcelona (Ecu) v Valdez (Ecu) 0-0
11.03.92 ULA v Valdez 0-2
15.03.92 Maritimo v Valdez 1-0
18.03.92 Maritimo v Barcelona 1-1
22.03.92 ULA v Barcelona 0-1
29.03.92 Valdez v Barcelona 0-1
29.03.92 ULA v Maritimo 0-0
01.04.92 Valdez v Maritimo 2-1
04.04.92 Barcelona v Maritimo 3-1
07.04.92 Valdez v ULA 1-1
10.04.92 Barcelona v ULA 5-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Barcelona	6	4	2	0	11	3	10
Maritimo	6	1	2	3	3	5	8
Valdez	6	2	2	2	5	4	6
ULA	6	1	2	2	4	10	4

GROUP 4
(Colombia — Peru)
26.02.92 America (Col) v At. Nacional (Col) 2-0
26.02.92 Sp. Boys (Peru) v Sp. Cristal (Peru) 1-1
10.03.92 America v Sport Boys 2-0
13.03.92 At. Nacional v Sport Boys 2-2
17.03.92 America v Sp. Cristal 1-0
20.03.92 At. Nacional v Sp. Cristal 1-0
25.03.92 At. Nacional v America 3-0
25.03.92 Sp. Cristal v Sport Boys 2-0
31.03.92 Sport Boys v America 1-2
03.04.92 Sp. Cristal v America 3-1
07.04.92 Sport Boys v At. Nacional 0-6
12.04.92 Sp. Cristal v At. Nacional 0-3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
At. Nacional	6	4	1	1	15	4	9
America	6	4	0	2	8	7	8
Sp. Cristal	6	2	1	3	6	7	5
Sport Boys	6	0	2	4	4	15	2

GROUP 5
(Paraguay — Uruguay)
04.03.92 Sol de America (Par) v C. Porteno (Par) 0-2
04.03.92 Defensor (Uru) v Nacional (Uru) 0-1
10.03.92 Defensor v Cerro Porteno 2-3
13.03.92 Nacional v Cerro Porteno 0-0
17.03.92 Nacional v Sol de America 2-2
20.03.92 Defensor v Sol de America 1-2
25.03.92 Cerro Porteno v Sol de America 2-0
25.03.92 Defensor v Nacional 3-2
31.03.92 Sol de America v Nacional 1-3
01.04.92 Cerro Porteno v Defensor 1-1
08.04.92 Cerro Porteno v Nacional 1-1
09.04.92 Sol de America v Defensor 0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Cerro Porteno	6	3	3	0	9	4	9
Nacional	6	2	3	1	9	7	7
Defensor	6	1	2	3	7	9	4
Sol de America	6	1	2	3	5	10	4

MEXICO: First Division
Group 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UA Mexico	30	12	11	7	43	30	35
Veracruz	30	12	7	11	38	34	31
Atlas	30	8	13	9	32	29	29
UA Guadalajara	31	7	12	12	32	37	26
Cobras	30	4	10	16	23	40	18

Group 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guadalajara	30	10	15	5	28	21	35
UA Tamaulipas	30	12	9	9	35	29	33
Puebla	30	11	11	8	33	31	33
Monterrey	30	8	10	12	29	41	26
Queretaro	30	5	11	14	27	42	21

Group 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruz Azul	30	12	10	8	45	39	34
Leon	30	11	12	7	36	33	34
Necaxa	30	10	12	8	49	38	32
Santos	30	10	9	11	37	38	29
Toluca	30	7	11	12	34	46	25

CONTINUED OVER

Group 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atlante	30	15	10	5	52	36	40
America	31	12	11	8	39	38	35
Morelia	30	10	12	8	34	32	32
UN Leon	30	12	7	11	42	39	31
Uni. Guadalajara	30	7	9	14	31	45	23

Top two of each group qualify for quarter-finals after 38 games.

HONDURAS: Final round (final)
1) Real Espana 14 pts; 2) Olimpia 11; 3) Platense, Marathon 7; 5) Motagua 3. Motagua (regular season champions) beat Real Espana 1-0 for title.

GUATEMALA: Final round (halfway)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Municipal	5	2	3	0	8	6	7
Comunicaciones	5	1	4	0	8	5	6
Izabal	5	1	4	0	6	5	6
Galcasa	5	1	3	1	9	7	5
Chiquimulilla	5	2	0	3	9	12	4
Del Monte	5	0	2	3	7	12	2

EL SALVADOR: First Division
1) Luis A. Firpo 42 pts; 2) Alianza 34; 3) FAS 32; 4) Fuerte San Francisco 29; 5) Aguila 26; 6) Marte Tiburones 25; 8) Baygon-ADET 24; 9) Metapan 22; 10) Cojutepeque 21.

COSTA RICA: First Division
Group 1: 1) Alajuelense 22 pts; 2) Perez Zeledon, Herediano 16; 4) Uruguay 10. Group 2: 1) Saprissa, Turrialba 21; 3) San Carlos, Limon 15. Group 3: 1) Puntarenas, El Carmen 18; 3) Cartagines, 16; 4) Guanacaste 12. (Top two eventually qualify for final round of six teams).

COLOMBIA: First Division
(After 4 games)
Group A: 1) Deportivo Cali 4 pts; 2) Atletico Junior, Pereira, Envigado, Tolima 3; 6) Nacional, Millonarios, Cucuta 2.
Group B: 1) Once Philips 5; 2) Bucaramanga, Quindio 4; 4) Union Magdalena, Independiente Santa Fe, Independiente Medellin 3; 7) America, Real Cartajena 2.

CHILE: Chile Cup
Group 1: Cobreloa 5 pts; 2) Antofagasta, Atacama 4; 4) Arica 2; 5) Iquique, Cobresal 1.
Group 2: 1) Everton, La Serena, Coquimbo Unido 4; 4) Wanderers 3; 5) San Felipe 2; 6) La Calera 0.
Group 3: 1) Palestino 7; 2) Universidad de Chile 6; 3) Audax Italiano 3; 4) Universidad Catolica 1; 5) Rangers 0.
Group 4: 1) Union Espanola 6; 2) Colo Colo, Colchagua 4; 4) Melipilla 2; 5) Magallanes 0.
Group 5: 1) Huachipato 5; 2) O'Higgins 4; 3) Fernandez Vial 1; 4) Santa Cruz, Lota Schwager 0.
Group 6: 1) Concepcion, Puerto Montt, Iberia 3; 4) Temuco 2; 5) Osorno 1.

BRAZIL: National First Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Vasco	9	6	2	1	20	7	14
Bragantino	9	5	3	1	6	4	13
Internacional	8	5	2	1	13	6	12
Botafogo	9	5	2	2	18	13	12
Sport	9	3	6	0	9	3	12
Cruzeiro	8	4	3	1	12	3	11
Fluminense	9	3	3	3	13	12	9
Corinthians	8	3	3	2	11	10	9
Flamengo	9	3	3	3	13	13	9
Santos	8	3	3	2	9	10	9
Goias	9	2	4	3	11	12	8
At. Paranense	9	3	2	4	10	16	8
Nautico	9	2	3	4	13	13	7
Portuguesa	8	2	3	3	11	11	7
Paysandu	9	3	1	5	8	16	7
Palmeiras	9	2	2	5	11	11	6
Sao Paulo	8	2	2	4	7	11	6
Guarani	8	3	0	5	6	12	6
Bahia	8	1	3	5	10	16	4
At. Mineiro	9	0	3	6	4	16	3

(Top eight advance to semi-final stage)

VENEZUELA: First Division
1) Minerven, Universidad de los Andes 29 pts; 3) Maritimo, Tachira 27; 5) Caracas FC, Mineros de Guyana 25; 7) Trujillanos, Zamora, Anzoategui 21; 10) Lara 19; 11) Monagas 18) 12) Italia 17; 13) Portguesa 15; 14) Estudiantes 13; 15) Industriales 11; 16) Salineros 8.

ARGENTINA: National A Division
(2nd round)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newell's	5	4	1	0	5	0	9
River Plate	5	3	2	0	12	7	8
Platense	5	3	1	1	8	3	7
Boca Juniors	5	3	1	1	5	2	7
Huracan	5	3	1	1	7	5	7
Dep Espanol	5	2	3	0	6	4	7
FC Oeste	5	2	2	1	8	4	6
Velez	5	2	2	1	8	5	6
Independiente	5	2	2	1	6	4	6
Talleres	5	2	2	1	3	2	6
Racing Club	5	1	3	1	3	3	5
Union Santa Fe	5	0	4	1	3	4	4
Estudiantes	5	1	2	2	9	12	4
Quilmes	5	2	0	3	5	8	4
Belgrano	5	1	1	3	5	6	3
Argentinos Jun	5	1	1	3	4	5	3
Dep Mandiyu	5	1	1	3	6	13	3
Rosario Cen.	5	1	0	4	4	10	2
San Lorenzo	5	1	0	4	1	7	2
Gimnasia	5	0	1	4	8	12	1

Relegation averages: Talleres 0, 91; Union Santa Fe 0,86; Dep Espanol 0,84; Belgrano 0,83; Quilmes 0,58. Bottom two will be relegated to B Division.

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

FULL INTERNATIONALS (Friendlies)

FEBRUARY 19
In San Salvador, El Salvador.
EL SALVADOR 2 (Castro, Guerrero)
US 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000.

● The US fielded an inexperienced squad including six newcomers which could not hold their more experienced rivals.

FEBRUARY 26
In Fortaleza, Brazil.
BRAZIL 3 (Antonio Carlos, Rai 2, one pen)
US 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Luis Vilanova.
Brazil: Carlos, Luis Carlos Wink (Cafu), Antonio Carlos, Ronaldo (Torres), Roberto Carlos, Cesar Samaio (Wilson Mano), Luis Enrique, Rai, Muller (Valdeir), Bebeto (Evair), Elivelton.
US: Meola, Clavijo (Ibsen), Savage, Balboa, Michallik, Murray, Quinn, Henderson (Acosta), Ramos, Perez, Vermes (Stewart).

● Even though the United States, with most of their top players back, put up a good performance and goalkeeper Meola was considered to be the best man on the field, Brazil's comfortable victory did not find favour with the home fans who booed them off the field at the end of the game. Brazil played a slow and cumbersome game without punch in attack. Their goals came from an opportune header from a corner and Rai's second half goals came from a penalty and a free-kick. Brazil had improved slightly in the second half as a result of substitutions.

MARCH 4
In San Jose, Costa Rica.
COSTA RICA 2 (Montero pen, Gonzalez)
EL SALVADOR 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Bemy Ulloa.
Costa Rica: Hidalgo, Myers (Arguedas), Montero, Gonzalez, Berry, Marchena, Guillen (Rowe), Gomez, Diaz (Smith), Guthrie, Coronado (Flores).
El Salvador: Garcia, Trigueros, Rivera (Abrego), Meza, Estrada, Lazo, Castro, Menjibar, Palacios, Corea (Vazguez), Guerrero.

● Both teams played more defensively in the first half which ended with the logical 0-0 score, but after six minutes of the second half El Salvador midfielder Lazo, who hotly protested a penalty award from which Costa Rica scored the first goal, was sent off. Costa Rica were slightly on top the rest of the way against 10-men rivals, but only made sure of victory with the second goal in the final minute. This was the 40th international between the two countries with Costa Rica leading 28-6 in victories.

MARCH 8
In Mexico City.
MEXICO 4 (Aguirre, Valdez, De la Torre, pen, Bernal)
CIS 0
HT: 2-0.
Mexico: Campos, Aguirre, Ramirez, Gutierrez, Espana, Ramirez Perales (Vazquez), Valdez, De la Torre (Bernal), L. Garcia, A. Garcia, Farfan (Espinosa).
CIS: Kharin, Kosev, Samitov, Sabitov, Arifulin, Nikitin (Kusmichen), Gorkov, Alenichev, Seregev, Smirnov, Terejov.

● The CIS team felt the 30c heat and altitude of Mexico City while Mexico showed good midfield play and rotation — coach Cesar Menotti's strong point — with De la Torre, A. Garcia and Farfan standing out.

MARCH 12
In Mexico City.
MEXICO 1 (L. Garcia)
CIS 1 (Smirnov)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Miguel Angel Salas (Mex).
Mexico: Campos, Gutierrez, Vazquez, Aguirre, Ramirez, Espana, De la Torre, A. Garcia, Farfan, Valdez, L. Garcia.
CIS: Kharin, Losev, Samitov, Arifulin, Gorkov, Podpoliy, Sabitov, Kuzmichev, Sergeev, Smirnov, Terekhov.

● The referee failed to stop rough play, mostly by the Soviets in a poor match, although he sent off Ramirez (Mex) and Samitov and Podpoliy (CIS) in the second half.

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

CONCACAF zone
Caribbean North, pre-preliminary round

MARCH 21
In Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1 (Mojica)
PUERTO RICO 2 (Lugris, Borja)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 7,000.
Dominican Republic: Caminero, Santana, Tiburcio, Mojica, Garcia, Marnol, Dipre (Sanchez Garcia), de la Cruz, Rodriguez, Cabral, (Cruz), Cuevas.
Puerto Rico: Mieldes, Espinoza, Lugris, Alvarez, Valles, Nazario, Koziol, Paonessa, Colon (Vaughan/Santiago), Borja, Milner.

● Puerto Rico dominated the first half against the young (average age 19) Dominican Republic side which pressed later and missed chances to equalise. The Dominican Republic was going to protest the match, claiming that the majority of the Puerto Rico side were not Puerto Ricans.

In Castries, St Lucia.
ST LUCIA 1 (Jean)
ST VINCENT 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 6,000.

SOUTH AMERICAN CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP
(Libertadores Cup)
First round

GROUP 1

FEBRUARY 18
In Santiago, Chile
COLO COLO (Chile) 1 (De Luca)
COQUIMBO UNIDO (Chile) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Salvador Imperatore (Chile).
Colo Colo: Moron, Garrido, Ramirez, Rebollo, Salvatierra (Adomaitis), Mendoza, Vilches, Pizarro, Borghi (De Luca), Rubio, Barticiotto.
Coquimbo Unido: J. Perez, Toledo, Munoz, Tanucci, Ramos, Rivero, Mondaca (Corro), Moraes, Zuniga (Peralta), Carreno, Gonzalez.

● Colo Colo attacked against a tight defence for most of the game, but could only score 24 minutes from the end.

FEBRUARY 21
In Santiago, Chile.
COLO COLO 1 (Barticciotto)
UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA (Chile) 1 (L. Perez)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Ivan Guerrero (Chile).
Colo Colo: Moron, Garrido, Ramirez, Margas, Salvatierra, Rebollo, Vilches, Pizarro, Adomaitis (De Luca), Barticciotto, Rubio (Martinez).
Univ. Catolica: Toledo, J. Gomez, Lopez, Del Solar, Romero, Lepe, R. Gomez (Tupper), Contreras (Parraguez), Reynoso, L. Perez, Kenig.

● Colo Colo pressed more, so much so that Universidad goalkeeper Toledo was the best man on the field, but they let up in the last 15 minutes when Universidad found loopholes in thier defence to equalize through Perez who had played for Colo Colo until last season.

FEBRUARY 26
In Coquimbo, Chile.
COQUIMBO UNIDO 3 (P. Gonzalez 3)
UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA 2 (Reynoso 2)
HT: 1-0.

● Coquimbo Unido's first win in the Libertadores Cup — they are taking part for the first time this year — came chiefly as a result of their best player, Pedro Gonzalez, who scored all three goals, while Universidad Catolica's best man, Argentine Gerardo Reynoso, scored twice.

In Rosario, Argentina.
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS (Arg) 0
SAN LORENZO (Arg) 6 (Acosta 3, Ponce, Rossi, Aguilar)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Juan Bava (Arg).
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Saldana, Gamboa, Pochettino, Berizzo, J.J. Rossi (Lunari), Llop, Martino, Zamora (Tudor), Domizzi, Mendoza.
San Lorenzo: Ruiz Diaz, Zandona, Ballarino, Zacarias, Riquelme, Matosas, Carrizo, Ponce, Gorrosito, R. Rossi, Acosta. (Changes: Aguilar/Matosas, G. Gonzalez/R. Rossi.

● San Lorenzo's open play was unstoppable and Newell's made some elementary mistakes in defence. Even if Newell's started looking like the better side and the first goal came from a free-kick which should not have been awarded, Newell's had no excuses after wards.

MARCH 3
In Buenos Aires, Argentina.
SAN LORENZO 1 (Acosta, pen)
COLO COLO 0
Ref: Juan Escobar (Par).
San Lorenzo: Ruiz Diaz, Zandona, Ballarino, Zacarias, Riquelme, Matosas, Carrizo, Ponce, Gorosito, J.J. Rossi (G. Gonzalez), Acosta.
Colo Colo: Moron, Ramirez, Garrido, Margas, Mendoza, Pizarro, Vilches, Adomaitis, Rubio (A. Gonzalez), De Luca, Barticciotto (Salvatierra).

● San Lorenzo pressed from the start against a team playing more on the defensive and scored the only goal after 16 minutes, but then they slowed down and lost rhythm, allowing the Chileans to even up the game. San Lorenzo came back in the second half, but several of their players were below form and near the end Colo Colo were within inches of the equalizer.

In Rosario, Argentina.
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS 3 (Berti, Zamora, Mendoza)
COQUIMBO UNIDO 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Julio Matto (Uru).
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Raggio, Llop, Pochettino, Saldana, Martino (Lunari), Berizzo, Berti, Zamora, Mendoza, Domizzi.
Coquimbo Unido: Perez, Moraes (Corro), Munoz, Tanucci, Rivero, Peralta, Mondaca, Carreno, Ramos, Zuniga (Toledo), P. Gonzalez.

● Newell's Old Boys were well on top, but had to wait until the last 25 minutes to make victory safe with two further goals. Both teams played the second half with 10 men, Domizzi (NOB) and Ramos (CU) being sent off just before the break.

MARCH 6
In Buenos Aires, Argentina.
SAN LORENZO 3 (Rinaldi, Gorosito, Acosta)
COQUIMBO UNIDO 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Sabino Farina (Par)
San Lorenzo: Ruiz Diaz, Zandona (Rinaldi), Ballarino, Zacarias, Riquelme, Matosas, Carrizo, Ponce, Gorrosito, Rossi (G. Gonzalez), Acosta.
Coquimbo Unido: Perez, Toledo, Tanucci, Munoz, Rivero, Mandoca (Corro), Peralta, Arnatti, Olguin (Benegas), P. Gonzalez, Varreno.

● San Lorenzo won deservedly, but could not get past the well-placed Chilean defence in the first half and it was only when Rinaldi came on as substitute for the second half that they found the way through to score their three goals in the last 20 minutes.

MARCH 7
In Rosario, Argentina.
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS 3 (Mendoza, Saldana, Lunari)
COLO COLO 1 (A. Gonzalez)
HT: 3-1. **Ref:** Ernesto Filippi (Uru).
Newell's OB: Scopini, Raggio, Llop, Pochettino, Saldana, Berti, Berizzo, Martino (Garfagnoli), Lunari, Zamora, A. Mendoza (Roldan).
Colo Colo: Moron, Garrido (Rubio), Salvatierra, Vilches, Margas, M. Ramirez, Borghi, Adomaitis, G. Mendoza (Rebollo), De Luca, A. Gonzalez.

● Newell's Old Boys scored the fastest goal ever in the Libertadores Cup to take the lead after nine seconds when Zamora, receiving a pass from the kick-off, raced down the wing and centred for Mendoza to head in. Colo Colo recovered from the early blow and were all square after 30 minutes, but Newell's delivered a virtual knock-out punch with two goals in the last two minutes before half-time. Newell's controlled play in the second half without actually being on top and Colo Colo finished with 10 men, having Borghi sent off two minutes from the end.

MARCH 9
In Santiago, Chile.
UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA 1 (Contreras)
NEWELL'S OLD BOYS 1 (Rossi)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** F. Chapel (Peru).
Univ. Catolica: Toledo, J. Gomez, Lopez, Del Solar, Romero, Parraguez, Lepe (R. Gomez), Contreras (Cardozo), Reinoso, Perez, Glaria.
Newell's OB: Scoponi, Saldana, Pochettino, Llop, Raggio (Rossi), Martino (Lunari), Berizzo, Berti, Mendoza, Domizzi, Zamora.

● Newell's gained a late, but deserved equalizer. In an even first half Universidad took a controversial lead after 35 minutes when a corner from Contreras found goalkeeper Scoponi and Berti in a mix-up on the goal-line. Scoponi appeared to mishandle and the referee signalled a goal, but it was unclear whether the ball actually went over the line. Newell's pressed more in the second half and failed to take advantage of a few more goal chances. Rossi headed in the equalizer from a free-kick seven minutes from the end.

MARCH 13
In Santiago, Chile.
UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA 4 (Contreras 2, Lopez, Kenig)
SAN LORENZO 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** A. Telada (Peru).
Univ. Catolica: Toledo, J. Gomez, Lopez, Del Solar, Romero, Contreras, R. Gomez, Parraguez, Reinoso, L. Perez (Tutter), Glaria (Kenig).
San Lorenzo: Ruiz Diaz, Riquelme, Zacarias, Ballarino, Zandona, (Rinadli), Ponce, Gorosito, Carrizo, Matosas, G. Gonzalez (Theiler), Acosta.

● Universidad Catolica took the lead in their first attack after three minutes — the first goal San Lorenzo had conceded in 173 minutes cup action — and continued to control play to take a 2-0 lead in 30 minutes while a nervous San Lorenzo often resorted to rough play to stop their rivals and goalkeeper Ruiz Diaz was the hardest worker on the field. By half-time they were left with nine men and the Chileans with 10 — Ballarino (SL), Gorosito (SL) and Gomez (UC) going off in the final seven minutes. The second half was a repetition of the first.

GROUP 2

MARCH 6
In Criciuma, Brazil
CRICIUMA (Bra) 3 (Jairo Lenzi, Gelson, Adilson)
SAO PAULO (Bra) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000.
Criciuma: Alexandre, Sarandi, Vilmar, Wilson, Ita, Roberto Cavalo, Gelson, Grizzo, Vanderlei (Soares), Ze Roberto (Adilson), Jairo Lenzi.
Sao Paulo: Zetti, Pintado, Antonio Carlos, Ronaldo, Ivan, Mona, Suelio, Eraldo (Cafu), Cate, Gilmar, Claudio (Rai).

● Criciuma, playing their first ever match in the cup, could have won even more easily, but lost chances through lack of experience. But Sao Paulo, apparently underestimating their rivals — who won the Brazil Cup but play in the second division — or feeling that they would have no trouble in taking one of the three qualifying places, fielded mostly reserves, resting their first teamers for the week-end's Brazilian championship game.

MARCH 9
In La Paz, Bolivia.
BOLIVAR (Bol) 2 (Salinas 2)
SAN JOSE (Bol) 1 (Vacaflor)
HT: 1-0.
Bolivar: Trucco, Rimba, Olaechea, Ferrufino, Perez (Montano), Soria, Borja, Lopez, Hernandez (Urruti), Hirano, Salinas.
San Jose: Ruiz, Vargas, Quinteros, Flores, Troncoso, Rioja, Arias, Aramayo (Mancilla), Valencia, Sanchez (Vacaflor) Pena.

● Internal problems held up preparations at San Jose — the Bolivian season had not yet started — and Bolivar were the better team. San Jose's goal came only just before the end.

GROUP 3

FEBRUARY 23
In Caracas, Venezuela.
MARITIMO (Ven) 1 (Mouro)
UNIVERSIDAD DE LOS ANDES (Ven) 2 (Molina, Cortez)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Freddy Mora (Ven)
Maritimo: Nikolac, Betancourt, Ribas, Rodriguez, Acosta, Rizzi, Lopez, San Vicente, Mouro, Dominguez, Cadavid.
ULA: Dudamel, Bonacorso, Sanchez, Londono, Echenausi, Gaviria, Davio, Tarazona, Ramirez, Molina, Cortes.

● ULA deserved the points with their second half performance. After their early second half equalizer, rivals Maritimo moved up for the winner, but left loopholes in defence.

In Guayaquil, Ecuador.
BARCELONA (Ecu) 0
VALDEZ (Ecu) 0
Ref: Milton Villavicencio (Ecu).
Barcelona: Mendoza, Montanero, Monzon, Bravo (Tenorio), Macias, Gavica, Insua, Bernuncio (Bravo), Rosero, Munoz, Gilbson.
Valdez: Cevallos, Carabali, Quinteros, Guerrero, Macias, Batioja, Zambrano (Moya), Cuvi, Sanchez, Munoz, Hurtado.

● Barcelona attacked more against a defence which remained solid even when Valdez were left with 10 men after 19 minutes (Bartioja off) and nine with 10 minutes to go (Guerrero off).

MARCH 11
In Merida, Venezuela
ULA 0
VALDEZ 2 (Hurtado, Brizuela)
HT: 0-1.
ULA: Dudamel, Echenausi, Bonacorso, Sanchez, Londono, Gavidia, Babio, Tarazona (Carvajal), Molina, Cortez, Gallardo.
Valdez: Ceballos, Pasmino, Carabali, Arboleda, Quintero, Macias, Moya, Sanchez, Milanovic (Brizuela), Cuvi (Salinas), Hurtado.

● Universidad controlled the field while Valdez counter-attacked and opened the score through Hurtado the first time they reached goal. Universidad then pressed hard for an equalizer, but could not get past the Valdez defence very often. Valdez made victory safe with a second goal only five minutes from the end.

MARCH 15
In Caracas, Venezuela
MARITIMO 1 (Mouro, pen)
VALDEZ 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Jorge Zuluaga (Col)
Maritimo: Nikolac, Pacheco, Rivas, Caraballo, Acosta, Rizzi, San Vicente, Lopez, Gomez, Mouro (Dominquez), Cadavid.
Valdez: Caballos, Carabali (Munoz), Quintero, Pazmino, Moya, Cuvi, Milanovic, Guerrero, Macias, Batioja, Hurtado.

● A penalty goal in the opening minute of the second half gave Maritimo their first win in their fourth Libertadores Cup campaign. Valdez played a defensive game to gain an away point and gave Maritimo few chances. If Carabali had not brought down a rival forward to give the penalty away, they might have achieved it.

GROUP 4

February 26
In Cali, Colombia.
AMERICA (Col) 2 (Da Silva, Angulo)
NACIONAL (Col) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000.
America: Nino, Balbis, Bermudez, Mendoza, Pimentel, Cabrera, Moreno,

Rincon, Redin, Da Silva (Angulo), Guerrero (Usuriaga).
Nacional: Franco, Herrera, Cassiani, Escobar, Villa, R. Perez, Gomez, Garcia, Serna, Asprilla, Aristizabal (Trellez).

● America were the better team with Guerrero mixing up the opposing defence, but it might have been a different story but for Balbis' good work in defence.

FEBRUARY 27
In Callao, Peru
SPORT BOYS (Peru) 1 (Charun)
SPORTING CRISTAL (Peru) 1 (Baldessari)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Fernando Chapell (Peru).
Sport Boys: Rodriguez, Duffo, Olivares, Jimenez, Ochandarte, Mastrillo, Marquinho, Moreno, Charun, Carty, Paris.
Sporting Cristal: Civarelli, Olivares, Pedraglio, Arteaga, Rojas, Zegarra, Pinillos, Novella, Navarro (Aviles), Torres, Baldessari.

● Sporting Cristal showed better technique in a poor and physical game, but rough play, for which Sport Boys were more responsible, evened it up.

MARCH 10
In Cali, Colombia.
AMERICA 2 (Angulo, Usuriaga)
SPORT BOYS 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 32,000. **Ref:** Alfredo Rodas (Ecu)
America: Nino, Bermudez, Balbis, Moreno, Pimentel, Cabrera. Escobar (Angulo), Rincon, Redin (Usuriaga), J. Da Silva, Guerrero.
Sport Boys: Rodriguez, Ochandarte (Anqueda), Duffo, Jimenez, Olivares, Charun, Mastrillo, Do Santos, Oliveira, Florez (Talavera), Carty.

● More experienced America deserved victory against rivals who came mainly to defend for a point and they had to wait for their goals until the final 15 minutes.

MARCH 13
In Medellin, Colombia
NACIONAL 2 (Escobar, Fajardo)
SPORT BOYS 2 (Carty, Moreno)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 42,000.
Nacional: Higuita, Herrera, Cassiani, Escobar, Villa, Perez (Trellez), Gomez, Garcia, Serna (Fajardo), Asprilla, Aristizabal.
Sport Boys: Rodriguez, Ochandarte (Talavera), Jimenez, Duffo, Mastrillo, Charin, Florez, Marquinho, Moreno (Berlechi), Carty, Oliveira.

GROUP 5

MARCH 4
In Asuncion, Paraquay
SOL DE AMERICA (Par) 0
CERRO PORTENO (Par) 2 (Gemnes, Chaves)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Carlos Maciel (Par).
Sol de America: D. Espinola, Ramirez, Leiva, Farina, Benitez, Estigarribia, Espinoza, Robles (Ferreira), J. Espinola (Sanabria), Cano, Brizuela.
Cerro Porteno: Goycochea, Barrios, Sanabria, Duarte, Cristaldo, Struway, Gamarra, Sotelo, Genes (Riveros), Chaves, Claudinho.

● Cerro Porteno were on top for most of the match against rivals who played below the form which won them last season's first division title. Yet they could only make sure of victory with their second goal four minutes from the end.

In Montevideo, Uruguay
DEFENSOR SPORTING (Uru) 0
NACIONAL (Uru) 1 (Borges)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Eduardo Dlugniewski (Uru).
Defensor Sporting: Arbiza, Gonzalez, Aguirregaray, Rodriguez, Gastan, Ferreri, Silva Cantera, Chilelli, Tejera, Dos Santos, Venancio Ramos.
Nacional: Sere, Soca, Ruben Silva, Saravia, Pintos Saldanha, Gomez, Borges, Lemos, Wanchope, Nunez, Dely Valdez.

● Both teams played a poor game — the season had not yet started — but players on both sides tried hard all through. Defensor Sporting, pressing more in the second half, were well held.

MARCH 10
In Montevideo, Uruguay
DEFENSOR SPORTING 2 (Michelini, Dos Santos)
CERRO PORTENO 3 (Genes, Cristaldo, Chaves)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Juan C. Biscay (Arg).
Defensor Sporting: Arbiza, Rodriguez, Gonzalez, Michelini, Gastan, Silva Cantera (Canepa), Chilelli, Tejera, Ramos (Lujambio), Favaro, Dos Santos.
Cerro Porteno: Goycochea, Duarte, Gamarra, Sanabria, Barrios, Sotelo, Cristaldo, Chavez, Genes (Villalba), Claudinho, Caballero.

● Visiting Cerro Porteno played an attacking game with good work by midfielders Sotelo and Cristaldo which brought deserved results in the second half when they overturned a 2-1 half-time deficit.

MARCH 13
In Montevideo, Uruguay
NACIONAL 0
CERRO PORTENO 0
Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Juan C. Loustau (Arg).
Nacional: Sere, Gomez, Saravia, Silva, Pintos Saldanha, Saralegui, Lemos, Cardaccio, Borges (Garcia), Nunez (Wanchopel), Julio Dely Valdez.
Cerro Porteno: Goycochea, Barrios, Sanabria, Gamarra, Duarte, Struway, Cristaldo, Sotelo, Chaves, Claudinho, Genes (Rivero).

● Neither team could play good soccer under continuous heavy rain. Nacional had a few more chances, but found Argentine World Cup goalkeeper Goycochea in fine form.

CONCACAF CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP
First round (1st legs)

FEBRUARY 26
In San Salvador, El Salvador
LUIS ANGEL FIRPO (El S) 0
UNAM (Mex) 0
Att: 15,000. **Ref:** Victor Rodriguez (C.Rica).
L.A. Firpo: C. Rivera, N. Rivera, Carcamo, Trigueros, Estrada, Henriquez, Gamez, Lazo (Toro), De Moura (Diaz Arce), Menjivar, De Mello.
UNAM: Campos, Suarez, Ramirez, Sanchez, Medina, Espana, Negrete, Torres Servin, Santillana (Noriega), Garcia, Misdrahi.

● UNAM attacked more, but lacked penetration against a tight defence.

MARCH 12
In Guatemala City, Guatemala
MUNICIPAL (Guat) 1 (Plata)
ALAJUELENSE (C. Rica) 1 (Monzon o.g.)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Leon Padro Borjas (Mex).
Municipal: Rojas, Delgado, Valverde, Guillen, Chacon, Badilla (Sosa), Arguedas, Ramirez, Viquez, Quiroz (Duran), Smith.
Alajuelense: Sopegno, Callen, Gudiel, Monzo, Hernandez, Funes, Moreno, Ponciano, Gordon (Plata), Ananiba, Rodas.

FEBRUARY 19
In Guatemala City, Guatemala
COMMUNICACIONES (Guat) 1 (Contreras)
MONTAGUA (Hon) 2 (Seminario, F. Perez)
HT: 0-0.
Comunicaciones: Jerez, Vazquez, Acevedo, Uberti, Contreras, Giron, Leon, Chacon (Arriazaga), Bordon, J. Perez, Vargas.
Montagua: Enrique, E. Sierra, Murillo, P. Sierra, Avila, Rodriguez, Nunez, Fernandez, Ovando, Seminario (Castro), Avila (F. Perez).

First round (2nd legs)

In Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
MOTAGUA 0
COMUNICACIONES 0
Att: 11,000. **Ref:** Antonio G. Ochoa.
Motagua: Henriquez, Fernandez, E. Sierra, Padilla, R. Rodriguez, M. Avila, Murillo, A. Rodriguez (Castro), Perez, G. Avila, Seminario.
Comunicaciones: Jerez, Vazguez, Uberti, Acevedo, Contreras, Giron, Leon, Perez, Bordon, Chacon, Vargas.

● Comunicaciones, needing a two-goal victory to qualify for the next round, were on top in the first half but lacked penetration in attack, but were controlled afterwards and went out on a 2-1 aggregate.

MAJOR CLUB INTERNATIONALS
Feb.20 — Sporting Cristal (Peru) 2 Liga Dep.Universitaria (Ecu) 0
Feb.21 — Cerro Porteno (Par) 2 Independiente (Arg) 0
Feb.23 — Universitario (Peru) 3 Nacional (Uru) 1; Bolivar (Bol) 4 Cobreloa (Chi) 1
Feb.25 — Alianza Lima (Peru) 3 Nacional (Uru) 0
Feb.26 — River Plate (Arg) 1 Colo Colo (Chi) 0
Feb.28 — Universitario (Peru) 1 Cruzeiro (Bra) 2
Mar.5 — Alianza Lima (Peru) 2 Deportivo Cali (Col) 1
Mar 11 — Penarol (Uru) 1 River Plate 0.

OTHER INTERNATIONALS
Mar.3 — El Salvador Olympic team 1 Mexico Olympic team 1.

INDONESIA
PSSI CUP
Group A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Persib	2	2	0	0	3	1	4
Persebaya	2	1	0	1	4	4	2
PSDS	2	0	0	2	2	4	0

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSMS	2	1	1	0	3	2	3
PSM	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Persegres	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Semi-finals
PSM 2 Persib 1
PSMS 4 Persebaya 2
3rd place
Persebaya 2 Persib 1
Final
PSMS 2 PSM 1 (aet)

INTERNATIONAL TABLES

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Porto	28	20	7	1	50	7	47
Benfica	27	15	9	3	49	16	39
Sporting	28	15	6	7	46	22	36
Boavista	28	13	10	5	36	19	36
Guimaraes	28	12	10	6	36	30	34
Farense	28	10	9	9	30	28	29
Maritimo	28	9	10	9	32	33	28
Braga	28	10	5	13	35	39	25
Beira-Mar	28	8	9	11	25	35	25
Estoril	28	9	7	12	28	40	24
Salgueiros	28	6	12	10	22	29	24
Pacos Ferreira	28	9	6	13	25	38	24
Gil Vicente	28	9	6	13	20	33	24
Chaves	27	8	7	12	27	34	23
Toreense	28	7	9	12	26	33	23
Uniao	28	8	5	15	26	43	21
Famalicao	28	6	8	14	20	37	20
Penafiel	28	5	9	14	22	39	19

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kispest	20	12	4	4	37	19	28
Vac	20	10	7	3	37	22	27
Ferencvaros	20	8	10	2	32	15	26
Siofok	20	11	4	5	32	22	26
MTK-VM	20	10	5	5	33	19	25
Videoton	20	7	10	3	27	20	24
Ujpesti	20	7	8	5	29	25	22
Pesci Munkas	20	7	6	7	15	17	20
Vasas	20	6	7	7	22	20	19
BVSC	20	5	8	7	20	19	18
Raba Eto	20	6	6	8	21	25	18
Tatabanya	20	5	7	8	16	29	17
Haladas	20	5	6	9	19	26	16
Veszprem	20	4	8	8	14	25	16
Diosgyor	20	4	6	10	16	30	14
Zalaegerszeg	20	0	4	16	10	47	4

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lech Poznan	20	12	5	3	38	34	29
Gornik Zabrze	20	8	9	3	29	20	25
Katowice	20	8	9	3	25	17	25
Widzew Lodz	20	10	4	6	29	18	24
Zawisza B.	20	8	7	5	27	21	23
Ruch Chorzow	20	7	8	5	30	28	22
Krakow	20	6	9	5	25	20	21
Slask Wrocklaw	20	9	3	8	25	22	21
LKS Lodz	20	4	12	4	15	16	20
Legia Warsaw	20	6	7	7	18	20	19
Motor Lublin	20	6	7	7	17	20	19
Stal S. Wola	20	5	9	6	14	18	19
Hutnik Krakow	20	6	6	8	29	27	18
Z. Sosnowiec	20	4	9	7	20	23	17
Z. Lubin	20	6	5	9	18	23	17
Stal Mielec	20	5	7	8	15	20	17
Oly. Poznan	20	4	7	9	21	28	15
Pegrotour	20	2	5	13	7	37	9

NORTHERN IRELAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Glentoran	27	22	4	1	73	23	70
Portadown	27	19	2	6	55	18	59
Linfield	27	16	8	3	54	21	56
Larne	27	14	6	7	45	30	48
Glenavon	27	14	4	9	44	33	46
Crusaders	27	12	4	11	47	35	40
Ards	27	9	9	9	44	43	36
Omagh	27	9	6	12	48	51	33
Bangor*	27	10	5	12	42	49	32
Ballyclare	27	8	8	11	36	49	32
Ballymena	27	7	10	10	35	47	31
Coleraine	27	7	8	12	33	47	29
Newry	27	8	5	14	28	48	29
Cliftonville	27	6	9	12	24	31	27
Distillery	27	3	7	17	26	55	16
Carrick Ran.	27	1	7	19	20	74	10

**3 points deducted by League*

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND (FINAL TABLE)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shelbourne	33	21	7	5	57	29	49
Derry City	33	17	10	6	49	21	44
Cork City	33	16	11	6	47	30	43
Dundalk	33	14	12	7	44	29	40
Bohemians	33	14	9	10	45	34	37
Shamrock R.	33	9	15	9	33	30	33
St Patricks Ath	33	9	11	13	38	45	29
Bray Wand.	33	8	10	15	17	37	26
Sligo Rovers	33	7	11	15	33	42	25
Drogheda Utd	33	6	13	14	23	46	24
Athlone Town	33	6	11	16	31	50	23
Galway Utd	33	7	8	8	37	58	22

**1 point deduced by League*

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Besiktas	25	19	6	0	49	15	63
Fenerbahce	24	18	2	4	56	23	56
Galatasaray	24	17	3	4	40	18	54
Trabzonspor	25	16	4	5	53	26	52
Aydinspor	25	10	5	10	31	34	35
Bursaspor	25	8	8	9	32	33	32
Sariyer	25	9	4	12	27	37	31
Gaziantep	25	7	9	9	26	34	30
Genclerbirligi	25	6	11	8	36	41	29
Ankaragucu	25	6	9	10	30	38	27
Altay	25	7	6	12	25	38	27
Boluspor	25	7	5	13	26	33	26
Bakirkoy	25	6	7	12	32	38	25
Konyaspor	25	5	7	13	22	31	22
Adanaspor	25	4	8	13	22	52	20
Samsunspor	25	4	6	15	33	50	18

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	38	19	15	4	68	35	72
Man United	36	19	14	3	57	26	71
Sheffield Wed	38	19	10	9	58	48	67
Arsenal	38	17	13	8	70	43	64
Liverpool	37	15	13	9	44	35	58
Manchester City	38	16	10	12	50	45	58
Aston Villa	38	15	9	14	43	39	54
Sheffield Utd	38	15	8	15	59	55	43
Crystal Palace	38	13	13	12	50	59	52
Nottm. Forest	37	14	9	14	54	52	51
Wimbledon	38	12	13	13	47	48	49
Chelsea	38	12	13	13	45	53	49
Tottenham	38	14	6	18	51	54	48
QPR	38	10	17	11	43	43	47
Oldham	38	13	8	17	60	61	47
Everton	38	11	13	14	46	45	46
Southampton	37	12	10	15	36	48	46
Norwich	38	11	11	16	46	58	44
Coventry	38	10	11	17	34	39	41
Luton	38	9	11	18	33	66	38
Notts County	38	8	10	20	36	56	34
West Ham	37	7	11	19	33	54	32

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	40	30	5	5	92	29	65
Celtic	41	25	9	7	85	40	59
Hearts	40	26	7	7	55	32	59
Aberdeen	41	17	12	12	53	38	46
Dundee Utd	41	16	13	12	61	49	45
Hibernian	41	15	15	11	49	42	45
Motherwell	41	10	14	17	40	54	34
St Johnstone	41	13	8	20	50	69	34
Falkirk	41	11	10	20	51	70	32
Airdrie	40	13	6	21	46	66	32
St Mirren	40	5	11	24	29	66	21
Dunfermline	41	3	10	28	18	74	16

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eintracht	31	15	11	5	63	34	41
Stuttgart	31	16	9	6	49	26	41
B. Dortmund	31	15	11	5	53	40	41
Leverkusen	31	13	12	6	44	28	38
Kaiserslautern	31	14	9	8	50	32	37
Numberg	31	15	6	10	46	41	36
Koln	31	8	17	6	41	34	33
Werder Bremen	31	10	12	9	33	32	32
Karlsruhe	31	11	8	12	36	43	30
Schalke	31	9	11	11	39	35	29
Bayern Munich	31	10	9	12	47	48	29
Borussia Mg.	31	9	11	11	28	38	29
Duisburg	30	6	15	9	34	39	27
Hansa Rostock	31	8	11	12	37	45	27
Hamburg	31	7	13	11	27	38	27
Wattenscheid	31	8	10	13	31	48	26
Dyn. Dresden	31	9	8	14	27	44	26
Bochum	31	7	11	13	28	48	25
Stuttgart K.	31	7	10	14	44	56	24
Fortuna	30	5	10	15	35	53	20

ISRAEL
Promotion Play-offs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Maccabi Tel-Aviv	25	18	4	3	64	24	58
Bnei Yehoudah	25	15	4	6	54	35	47
Maccabi Haifa	25	11	5	9	38	30	38
H. Petah Tikvah	25	10	3	12	28	28	35
Betar Tel-Aviv	25	10	4	11	35	30	34
M. Nathanyah	25	7	10	8	24	30	31

Relegation Play-offs

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
M Petah Tikvah	25	9	9	7	34	33	36
H Holon	25	10	5	10	31	25	35
H. Beer Shebah	25	9	7	9	33	34	34
H. Tel-Aviv	25	7	8	10	21	30	28
M. Yavneh	25	5	7	13	23	42	22
H. Jerusalem	25	5	3	17	16	58	18

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	28	18	6	4	56	18	42
Club Brugge	28	16	10	2	50	18	42
Standard	28	14	12	2	46	21	40
Mechelen	28	14	9	5	39	18	37
Gent	28	12	8	8	44	38	32
Antwerp	28	14	4	10	37	34	32
Cercle	28	9	13	6	45	40	31
Lierse	28	12	6	10	44	40	30
Ekeren	28	9	10	9	36	37	28
Lokeren	28	8	10	10	35	38	26
RWDM	28	10	6	12	32	37	26
Waregem	28	10	5	13	43	50	25
Beveren	28	6	11	11	34	40	23
FC Liege	28	5	12	11	25	34	22
Charleroi	28	7	8	13	25	35	22
Genk	28	5	9	14	21	38	19
Kortrijk	28	5	7	16	28	62	17
Aalst	28	2	6	20	12	54	10

YUGOSLAVIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	26	19	3	4	61	19	41
Partizan	26	17	7	2	48	15	36
Proleter	26	14	3	9	33	31	31
Belgrade	26	13	8	5	48	31	30
Vojvodina	26	12	5	9	28	29	28
Sarajevo	26	12	6	8	33	27	27
Vardar	25	11	4	10	37	30	25
Zemun	26	12	3	11	36	30	24
Borac	26	9	8	9	18	24	22
Rad	25	10	3	12	35	35	21
Radnicki	25	10	3	12	30	32	21
Velez	25	9	5	11	31	35	21
Sloboda	26	8	3	15	23	40	18
Buducnost	26	8	6	12	22	27	17
Sutjeska	26	8	3	15	31	41	16
Zeljeznicar	25	6	4	15	21	41	16
Pelister	25	7	2	16	22	43	15
Spartak	26	5	6	15	18	45	12

CYPRUS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Apoel	23	16	6	1	58	22	54
Anorthosis	23	16	3	4	49	21	51
Apollon	23	14	5	4	46	23	47
Omonia	23	12	5	5	42	27	42
Salamina	23	10	5	8	41	42	35
AEL	23	9	6	8	32	32	33
Pezoporikos	23	8	7	8	38	36	31
Paralimni	23	7	7	8	31	27	29
Epa	23	7	7	9	32	33	28
Evagoras	23	6	4	13	22	36	22
Aris	23	5	7	11	24	42	22
Olympiakos	23	5	5	13	22	50	20
Alki	23	4	6	13	22	38	18
Aradipou	23	1	7	15	17	45	10

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	29	19	5	5	59	22	43
Barcelona	29	17	8	4	61	32	42
Atletico Madrid	29	17	4	8	46	26	38
Valencia	29	15	6	8	42	30	36
Albacete	29	13	8	8	36	29	34
Sporting Gijon	29	13	6	10	30	30	32
Seville	29	12	7	10	41	32	31
Zaragoza	29	12	7	10	30	28	31
Real Sociedad	29	11	8	10	28	30	30
Logrones	29	11	7	11	27	38	29
Burgos	29	9	10	10	27	28	28
Athletic Bilbao	29	10	6	13	29	46	26
Oviedo	29	9	7	13	32	38	25
Osasuna	29	8	9	12	22	32	25
Tenerife	29	8	7	14	33	39	23
Dep. Coruna	29	6	11	12	24	33	23
Valladolid	29	6	10	13	25	35	22
Espanol	29	8	6	15	29	42	22
Cadiz	29	6	9	14	25	39	21
Mallorca	29	7	5	17	17	34	19

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Slovan	21	17	4	0	43	10	38
Sigma Olomouc	21	14	6	1	45	11	34
Sparta Prague	21	15	2	4	48	15	32
Banik Ostrava	21	12	5	4	41	25	29
Slavia Prague	21	10	6	5	43	20	26
Inter Bratislava	21	10	3	8	34	31	23
Tatran Presov	21	10	3	8	22	28	23
D. Streda	21	6	4	11	31	33	16
Dukla Prague	21	4	8	9	20	28	16
Banska Bystrica	20	6	4	10	22	31	16
Bohemians	21	5	6	10	24	34	16
Vitkovice	21	6	2	13	25	44	14
Union Cheb	21	5	4	13	21	41	14
Hradec Kralove	20	4	5	11	14	28	13
C. Budejovice	21	5	3	13	20	42	13
Spartak Trnava	21	2	7	12	11	43	11

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	27	18	9	0	55	15	45
Juventus	27	16	7	4	37	17	39
Naples	27	12	10	5	46	33	34
Torino	27	10	12	5	25	13	32
Inter	27	8	15	4	23	21	31
Parma	27	9	12	6	26	24	30
Lazio	27	9	11	7	36	28	29
Sampdoria	27	9	11	7	29	25	29
Genoa	27	9	10	8	32	32	28
AS Roma	27	8	12	7	28	28	28
Atlanta	27	8	11	8	21	23	27
Foggia	27	8	9	10	41	44	25
Fiorentina	27	8	8	11	34	32	24
Cagliari	27	5	11	11	25	31	21
Verona	27	7	5	15	16	36	19
Bari	27	4	9	14	19	36	17
Cremonese	27	4	7	16	18	39	15
Ascoli	27	4	5	18	18	52	13

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	22	15	4	3	51	18	34
Levski	22	14	5	3	38	12	33
Botev	22	11	6	5	36	19	28
Etur	22	9	9	4	26	12	27
Lok. Plovdiv	22	10	6	6	26	15	26
Sliven	22	8	7	7	29	32	23
Lok. Sofia	22	7	7	8	26	28	21
Beroe	22	7	7	8	20	25	21
Slavia	22	7	6	9	26	24	20
Yantra	22	6	8	8	17	24	20
Pirin	22	5	8	9	15	24	18
Lok G.O.	22	5	8	9	15	26	18
Chernomorets	22	6	6	10	20	32	18
Dobrudja	22	6	5	11	22	33	17
Hebar	22	3	9	10	13	28	15
Minor	22	3	7	12	10	38	13

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PSV	30	21	8	1	66	24	50
Ajax	30	21	5	4	69	21	47
Feyenoord	29	17	8	4	45	17	42
Vitesse	30	14	8	8	43	29	36
EKC	29	10	12	7	48	39	32
Groningen	28	12	8	8	39	31	32
Roda JC	29	11	10	8	36	33	32
Utrecht	29	9	13	7	33	29	31
Twente	29	11	8	10	48	45	30
Sparta	29	9	11	9	41	49	29
MVV	29	9	10	10	30	38	28
Willem II	29	10	7	12	40	38	27
Volendam	31	10	7	14	31	41	27
SVV/Dordrecht	30	8	5	17	36	58	21
Den Haag	31	5	10	16	27	55	20
Fortuna S

Premier strike threat recedes

THE threat of a players' strike receded when the Premier League, scheduled to open for business in August, lured them back from the brink with the offer of a bigger slice of the television revenue cake.

The clubs had insisted they would not improve on the five per cent cut they were proposing to give the Professional Footballers' Association. But when a ballot of First Division players revealed more than 90 per cent were willing to take industrial action, a new "final" offer was forthcoming.

Indicated

Premier League leaders indicated they were willing to comprise with the PFA, who were demanding the ten per cent share they take under the current television agreement.

Rick Parry, chief executive of the Premier League, said: "We have moved some way because the priority must be to reach a settlement."

His PFA counterpart, Gordon Taylor, said: "I am more hopeful than I was, but there are still quite a number of issues to be settled. No action will be taken while we try to sort out a peace formula."

Taylor added: "We want to work with the Premier League in harmony. The only way this game can go forward is through partnership, and a proper respect between the people involved in the sport. We want to clear the air, not spoil it."

Manchester United's Rumbelows Cup-winners 1992. Back (l to r): Ince, Hughes, Giggs, Phelan, Sharpe, Kidd (assistant manager), Kanchelskis, Schmeichel, Webb. Front: Pallister, Bruce (captain), Irwin, McClair, Parker.

UNITED ON COURSE FOR A DOUBLE

BY DERICK **ALLSOP**

MANCHESTER UNITED won the Rumbelows League Cup for the first time, when a goal by Brian McClair, his 100th for the club, proved enough to defeat Nottingham Forest, in a disappointing final at Wembley.

United's priority may have been the League Championship, but they still had too much strength and zest for a team making their second Wembley appearance in two weeks.

Forest, ZDS Cup-winners on that occasion, obviously missed the driving influence of captain Stuart Pearce, while United had no qualms about holding back their skipper, Bryan Robson, for the title run-in.

With former Forest star Neil Webb on the United substitutes' bench, Mike Phelan emerged as their unlikely midfield hero: competing, prompting and demonstrating admirable authority.

Mark Hughes has found goals more difficult to come by this season, but his muscular leadership, particularly in the second half, proved a crucial weapon in United's strategy.

Worked

So, too, did the impish skill of Ryan Giggs, even if it was only fleetingly evident. He gave McClair an exquisite return ball to register the 15th minute match-winner and twice more almost worked his magic in the Forest area.

Roy Keane's runs from deep could not give Forest the impetus they required and Nigel Clough, despite being close with a curled free-kick, rarely dictated the flow of the contest.

United manager Alex Ferguson said: "Forest obviously missed Pearce. The difference was we handled the absence of Bryan Robson better."

Forest's assistant manager Ronnie Fenton agreed: "Pearce is more than half our team and we knew we would have problems if he didn't play."

SOUNESS BOMBSHELL!

LIVERPOOL are likely to be without the services of their manager Graeme Souness until the start of the first Premier League season. The 38-year-old Scot is recovering from a triple bypass heart operation.

Souness went into hospital for surgery the day after enduring a nerve-racking FA Cup semi-final at Highbury. His team salvaged an equaliser late in extra time to take Second Division Portsmouth to a replay.

He watched the replay on television from his hospital bed and had to endure the tension of a penalty shoot-out as Liverpool scraped past Portsmouth after a 0-0 draw.

Ronnie Moran, who took over as caretaker-manager when Kenny Dalglish quit last season, was again given temporary charge of first team affairs.

Souness, who returned to the club he played for after successfully managing Rangers, is renowned as a fitness fanatic and his coronary condition is believed to be hereditary.

As he entered the private hospital at Cheadle, Cheshire, for the five-hour operation, he said: "This has to be the biggest shock I've ever had. I'm looking forward to it, but it has to be done."

Maintained

In the other semi-final First Division Norwich City could not save themselves from defeat against Second Division strugglers Sunderland.

John Byrne maintained his record of scoring in every round to head the only goal of the match for the club who beat Leeds United in the 1973 final.

The current Leeds side missed the opportunity to go back above Manchester United at the top of the First Division when they were thrashed 4-0 away to Manchester City.

Manchester United, presented with the chance to go four points clear with a match in hand, also found City an obstacle when they met at Old Trafford. City, despite having Neil Pointon sent off, after clashing with Ryan Giggs, came from behind to earn a 1-1 draw.

The ball was back in Leeds' court, and this time they used it to good effect. Three second-half goals, including a stunner from French striker Eric Cantona, disposed of Chelsea at Elland Road and lifted them above United by one point. United, preparing for Wembley, had two matches in hand.

United had already scooped the prizes in the PFA annual polls. Central defender Gary Pallister was voted Player of the Year and Ryan Giggs Young Player of the Year. The previous year the awards went to United's Mark Hughes and Lee Sharpe.

Souness . . . recovering from major heart surgery.

National games may be moved from Hampden

DISAPPOINTINGLY low attendances at Scotland's recent friendlies against Northern Ireland and Finland have, if nothing else, confirmed beyond all doubt that the general appetite held by the average Scottish fan for such fixtures has waned beyond recognition.

The poor turn-outs have also underlined the fact that, if such matches have to be played, they should be contested at alternative venues to Hampden Park.

Hosting friendly internationals at locations such as Aberdeen and Perth would constitute a positive public relations exercise by the SFA who would be seen to be taking the initiative in recognising the importance of supporters in those areas.

Such a decision would go some way towards dispelling the "Glasgow Mafia" myth which has, historically, led to all sorts of cultural divisions within the Scottish game.

On a more practical note, crowds in the region of 10,000 at places like Pittodrie or McDiarmid Park would generate a much better atmosphere than that which was apparent at Hampden during the recent internationals.

Praised . . . Dundee United midfielder David Bowman.

Players clearly lacked motivation as a result of performing in front of vast, sparsely populated terraces.

The one encouraging aspect to emerge from the disappointing 1-1 draw with Finland was the performance of Dundee United's David Bowman.

Making his full international debut at the age of 28, Bowman, who had previously played for Hearts and Coventry City, added some welcome "bite" to a midfield which has often been accused of lacking commitment.

Bowman did well to create the opening for Paul McStay to score Scotland's goal and was the subject of specific praise from national coach Andy Roxburgh, who now sees him as a possible candidate for inclusion in the squad for the European Championship.

Spectator lethargy in Scotland has not, however, been confined solely to the international arena. With many domestic issues having been settled long before completion of the scheduled 44-game league programme, end of season attendances have fallen sharply.

Crowds of under 5,000 have been common at Premier League games as players have gone through the motions with nothing more to play for than professional pride and bonus money.

It is a situation which needs urgent discussion to generate ideas necessary to stimulate more interest in the game.

But the answer lies with the clubs themselves who must strive to ensure a more competitive environment than that which is currently evident.

One of the most maligned clubs in Scotland this season yet, in comparative terms one of the most successful, has been Airdrie.

Managed by former Hearts boss Alex MacDonald, they have not only secured Premier League status following their promotion last year, but have also reached the final of the Scottish Cup.

Airdrie's somewhat robust tactical strategy has led to fierce criticisms from various angles, but MacDonald retorts: "the rules are the same for everyone, you just have to play by them."

A total of 20 players have been sent off in matches against Airdrie this season, a statistic which suggests the Broomfield side have mastered the art of upsetting their opponents, hence the vitriol which has been targeted in their direction.

Airdrie have strengthened their squad with the signings of a number of players from English football, most notably Gus Caesar from Bristol City.

The former Arsenal player had no doubts in making the move from the West Country to the heart of industrial Lanarkshire.

"Playing for Airdrie in the Premier League gives me the chance to compete against quality players," he says. "I'm competing against the likes of McStay, Gillhaus, McCoist, Hateley and Mikhailichenko and that provides me with a far greater challenge than continually fighting against relegation with Bristol City."

ALAN **FAIRLEY**

TREVOR BROOKING

Taylor made for football

WHEN most people in football mention the name of Taylor it is usually the England manager Graham who comes to mind.

But in the last few weeks it is GORDON Taylor who has figured in just as many headlines.

He is the Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, the players union, and it was his dispute with the new Premier League which threatened to bring about a devastating players strike just as the season reached its climax.

In all honesty I think the decision to actually stop playing had to be an absolute last resort.

Implied

But there were many issues under threat, not just a percentage of TV money as was implied.

The first point to look at has to be the PFA itself, and the sort of job it does for players.

It's only when there is a confrontation that the Association receives such publicity.

There is no doubt in my mind, they have supplied a marvellous range of services for their players, starting with the youngsters who first join a professional club, and on to the star names who need contractual or even promotional advice.

But less than 25 per cent of youngsters who start out on a professional football career actually go on to make the grade. That is why it must be emphasised to young players how important it is to continue their education in those early years.

Many of the costs for these academic and business courses are covered by the PFA.

One of the most vital roles for the PFA has been the common sense they offer to both player and clubs when contracts are on the table for discussion.

Gordon Taylor (above) has emerged, in his role of Chief Executive, as a respected spokesman for all aspects of the game.

On occasions he has been linked with some of the key posts at the Football League and Football Association, but each time has been persuaded to stay.

Revolved

In the recent disagreement a major concern revolved around the pension benefits of those players now moving into the new structure of the Premier League. All current rights and contributions agreed with the Inland Revenue for the Football League, needed to be protected when switching to a new organisation.

Also the percentage for television rights became a stumbling block.

Eventually a sensible compromise was reached, but again a majority of the additional receipts will be used to look after the less fortunate members.

Like all good organisations, much of their work is often taken for granted, as matters are usually resolved very quickly, and although the latest crisis now appears to have passed, it highlighted the good fortune of players to have the PFA in the safe hands of Gordon Taylor and Co.

THE REAL McCOY

BY ROY **KITSON**

THE 112th Irish Cup Final on May 2 will match last season's beaten finalists, Glenavon, with Linfield, making their first appearance in Northern Ireland's showpiece occasion since 1985.

Glenavon gave a five-star semi-final performance against Ballymena, with man of the match Ray McCoy — the most expensive transfer ever between Irish League clubs when he joined Glenavon from Coleraine in November 1990 — capping a superb performance with a solo goal.

The other Glenavon goals in a 3-1 victory were scored by midfielder Fintan McConville, who recently returned after a ten-month stint in New Zealand.

Striker Glenn Ferguson and international winger Stephen McBride were out through injury.

McBride, who leads the Smirnoff League scorers list with 18 goals, shattered his right kneecap in a recent match and will be out of action for at least 18 months.

Glenavon manager Alan Fraser, formerly assistant at Linfield, has improved the team's rather porous defence and the recent signing of central defender Nigel Quigley from Coleraine has made a big difference.

Deserved

Linfield manager Eric Bowyer has had more than his fair share of frustrations since he took over from Roy Coyle two seasons ago, but gradually he has built up a squad who can challenge for the major honours.

The semi-final victory over Crusaders, with goals from Stephen Baxter and Lindsay Curry, was deserved, though the match was a scrappy affair.

Linfield's army of supporters will not mind that, for they now have a chance to rival Glentoran, from the East of the city, who are runaway leaders in the Smirnoff League and will represent Northern Ireland in next season's Champions' Cup.

Omagh Town's financial worries have eased considerably after Ards splashed £30,000 for 23-year-old striker Harry McCourt and 25-year-old midfielder John Crilly, both of whom incidentally, are training to be solicitors.

AJAX

Menzo, Van Loen, Vink, Pettersson, Roy, Blind, Van't Schip, Winter, De Boer, Groenendijk, Wouters

TORINO

Lentini, Benedetti, Policano, Bruno, Martin Vazquez, Marchegiani, Cravero, Bresciani, Scifo, Venturin, Fusi